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THE WHITE STICK IN BOMBING TIME

By F. W. PRESTON-JARMAN.

“**W**HEN the bombs begin to fall uncomfortably near home, what will be my reactions?”

At the moment when the enemy unleashed the full fury of his aerial offensive against this island, this question, or something akin to it, probably loomed large in the minds of most of us. . . .

Some weeks after the so-called blitzkrieg began, I awoke in the early hours of one morning to hear a violent explosion and crash, and, rapidly following, the all-too-familiar whistle of other hurtling mischief. The house palpably lurched towards the north-west and, for what seemed to me an age, my only concern was when, if at all, it would return to its normal position. Once this happy state was restored, my attention passed to the sound of heavy gunfire and of a scampering alien bomber; and then to a dog who barked a vigorous protest against the rude disturbance of the night. Yet soon there came a complete silence which, at first, seemed as unnatural as the previous tumult had been in fact, but which, by its persistence, gradually earned a welcome devoid of suspicion.

Subsequently, as I lay in my bed ruminating upon the possible untimely consequences of the crash, I was given to wonder if at or piteously near to the scene there was present a heaven-sent soul, unruffled and unscathed. Someone, indeed, who could give effective solace to any there might be less able to bear the strain of a merciful deliverance. Here my thoughts flashed back to a summer day some few years ago.

On that summer day I took a stroll in a public park and there I eventually sat down on a long empty seat. After a brief space two men in company came along and took places on the same seat. At first I paid no heed to them; but, when I happened to glance up, I observed that the man nearer to me held a white stick, and my interest quickened.

The two men chatted quite openly, and it soon became evident that the man with the white stick was the more animated and the more fluent talker. Once or twice I fancied that the knowledge he displayed puzzled his companion, especially when, after its address had been disclosed to him, he proved he knew the exact location of the latter's home,

Suddenly there dashed up on the grass behind the seat a boy of about eight or nine years of age. He proved to be the son of the man with the white stick, whom he asked to come and find a ball that he had lost in a nearby shrubbery. The father explained that he was engaged in conversation, and bade his son seek more diligently.

But the boy, who, I suspected, had all a child's esteem for anyone who can get things done with skill and celerity, only departed with great reluctance; and, after a short interval, I was not surprised to find him back to resume his entreaties. This time he was offered the white stick as an aid, but he showed no faith in this by itself and, indeed, his perfect confidence that a lack of sight did not deprive his father of the ability to find the lost ball was at once manifest and impressive. Not until he was convinced that his father would remain firm did he depart once again and without the stick. No doubt his father's instructions enabled him to recover the ball; at any rate, I noted that he did not return.

Afterwards the two men spoke of traffic conditions and, in particular, they discussed a dangerous road crossing over which the boy passed to and from school. Touching his son's use of this crossing, the man with the white stick was asked by his companion whether he did not sometimes feel anxious.

"Oh, no," was the reply, and its tone was earnest and carried a positive assurance. "You see, I taught him how to use the crossing myself."

A little later, my unsought but none the less stimulating diversion came to what I could only regard as a premature close. For first his companion took leave of him and then, very soon, up rose the man with the white stick himself who, as he turned away, gave me a crisp impression not only of a sturdy figure of middle height, but also of a strong man in more ways than one. He held the white stick as though it were a wand, and I heard him move away down the asphalt path slowly, deliberately and, as it seemed to me, magicianlike, perhaps even conforming to a closely knit scheme.

There in my bed this same crisp and heartening impression came back to me. This impression given on a summer day in peace-time by the man with the white stick. How would he fare, how would he acquit himself, in bombing-time?

About some things I felt confident. He could be relied upon to be one of those who, Nansen-like, would face the known facts and delve constructively into the possibilities. Bombs and havoc, come what might, he would know beforehand how he must try to act.

Perhaps equally important to his fellow-citizens he would know what he must be able and ready to say. Indubitably, abundant and unsurpassed opportunity for him to exercise his powers in this respect would not lack. In Britain's history, never can the spoken word that rings true and reassures have been of greater service to the nation than in bombing-time.

Yes, and such was my faith, the more I pondered the more I came to believe not only that the man with the white stick would show apprehensive caution at its proper stage, but, under grim ordeal, would be found steady and undaunted.

Whether in a private or public shelter his example alone might well inspire fortitude. If, in a shelter, he were not otherwise usefully occupied, then he of all men would be ready to talk matters over. He would have put undue anxiety behind him, and would help others to cross a harrowing situation to confidence. On all other good occasions as well as on a summer day in peace-time, there is a fillip to be had from the exposition and offerings of an active, flexible and resolute mind. In bombing-time there is balm.

Within the shelter of my bed I can scarcely doubt that memories and ruminations combined to bring me under the spell of the man with the white stick.

I know that he held my thoughts immediately before I sank into a further few hours of sleep that was quite untroubled. I know, too, that when I awoke he had but slightly relaxed his grip. Moreover, although in the first daylight hour of that late autumn morning my recollections of the violent and unholy disturbance of the night's peace were ample and clear, they hung upon me with a certain measure of buoyancy rather than a harassing weight. A measure of buoyancy that was surprising enough but not inscrutable. More's the mercy, to outset violence the spell had been cast to conjure up for me gentler considerations.

So it became plain that this bomb story would ever belong as much to peace-time as to war. So, too, I could set no narrow limit to my gratitude for the chance that had taken me to a public park on a summer day some few years ago.

Bombing Experiences Wanted.

The Editor of THE NEW BEACON would welcome short articles describing actual experiences of blind people in Air Raids. These could be written by the blind people themselves or by Home Teachers and others in contact with them. Address: The Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

HOME NEWS

Surrey Blind's Handsome "Spitfire" Gift.—

Some of the blind people in Surrey who were anxious to do their bit in the war effort have subscribed £25 towards the purchase of a Spitfire, and a cheque for this amount sent to the Ministry of Aircraft Production has been gratefully acknowledged.

Maintenance of Wireless Sets for the Blind.—

The question has been raised whether any local society or agency for the blind has a scheme whereby professional wireless engineers contract to maintain wireless sets furnished to the blind for an agreed annual figure. The British Wireless for the Blind Fund, 226 Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, would be grateful to know of any such arrangement.

Talking Book Library.—War conditions inevitably reduced the output of new Talking Book titles in the year 1940, quite apart from the destruction of the Talking Book Studio by a bomb in October, 1940. The number of new titles produced in London was 22, as compared with 46 in the year 1939. On the other hand, 36 titles were bought from America in the year as compared with 16 in the previous year.

Evacuation and difficulties of transport have reduced to some extent the flow of books on loan, but the number of reader-listeners using the Library increased in the year 1940 from 1,259 to 1,300.

Fire at Harborne Blind Workshops.—Damage was caused by fire last month to workshops of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind at Harborne. Firemen succeeded in confining the damage to the Brush Department, where the roof was burned off. Fortunately no blind persons were on the premises at the time, and it was hoped that production would not be affected.

Braille Books Lost in the Manchester Blitz.—

One of the minor tragedies of the recent intensive bombing of Manchester was the destruction of hundreds of Braille manuscripts, and in particular of an irreplaceable Braille dictionary, in 24 manuscript volumes, which was the result of three years' devoted work by a voluntary worker for the blind.

Puppy Saves Blind Girl.—In one of the raids on Southampton, a seven-year-old blind girl owed her life to a puppy which scratched its

way through four feet of debris, leaving a way clear for his young mistress, who was rescued unhurt. When the bomb fell, the girl—Mary Chalver—was clasping her pet, a Welsh collie, in her arms. The whole family was buried, but all were saved.

The Home of Recovery, Goring.—Owing to illness it has been necessary to defer the formal opening of the National Institute's Home of Recovery at Long Meadow, Goring-on-Thames, though two patients will have been admitted before the January issue of THE NEW BEACON is in print. These are both women, one a nurse in a mental hospital and the other a waitress, and they hope soon to be joined by others. Lessons in Braille and handicrafts have already been begun, and the keen interest taken promises well for the future. Appointments to staff are announced on page 14.

Blind Persons' Own Fund.—Readers of THE NEW BEACON will be interested to know that this Fund, for the benefit of civilians blinded in air-raids and subscribed entirely by the blind, has now reached the sum of over £22. It is to be used for obtaining for the newly-blinded civilians such extra gifts as may fall outside the ordinary scope of assistance. A blinded lady who recently was helped to purchase a portable typewriter by means of the Fund is already making good use of her machine to correspond with her seeing friends.

Birkenhead Blind's Gift to Distress Fund.—

The blind people of Birkenhead have just made a subscription of Four Guineas to the local Air Raid Distress Fund. The money was raised by the raffle of a shawl which was knitted by a totally blind girl; tickets were sold for the small sum of twopence each.

N.I.B. Victory Poster No. 2.—In October last the National Institute for the Blind issued the first of its Victory Posters, a quotation from the Prime Minister's speech of 11th September (see THE NEW BEACON, October, page 191). The second Victory Poster will shortly be ready, bearing the following words from Lord Lothian's last speech :—"The centre of our creed, for all our mistakes of omission and commission, is liberty, justice and truth, and that, we believe, will infallibly prevail if we have resolution and the courage to resist to the end."

INCREASED BRAILLE BOOKBINDING PRICES

OWING to the war the cost of all materials used in the production of Braille periodicals and books has increased, in some cases by more than 100 per cent.; wages have also increased, though to a much lesser extent. For this reason the National Institute for the Blind is compelled to make small increases in the prices of all items of bookbinding as from the 15th January, 1941.

The full effect of the increased cost of materials is not reflected in these prices, since the Institute still holds stocks of certain items purchased before the war or in its earlier stage when price increases were not so heavy as to-day; also, in certain items where the increase in cost is exceptionally heavy the Institute bears part of the burden by refraining from passing on the full measure to the customer.

The new prices may be regarded as firm for several months, but as present stocks of materials are used up and have to be replaced at to-day's higher prices, revision from time to time will become necessary.

	Pre-war Price per vol.		New Price per vol.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
MANUSCRIPT BINDING :				
Paper Covers, Leathercloth Back	1	6	1	9
Stiff Board Covers, Buckram Back	2	9	Unchanged	
Cloth Board Covers, Buckram Back	3	0	3	9
RE-BINDING OF PAPER COVERED VOLUMES :				
In Cloth Boards with Buckram				
Back	1	6	1	10
In Stiff Board (Presspahn) Covers :				
Bible, A.V.	0	8	0	10
Other works	0	9	1	0

BRAVE DECEIVER

A little incident which a Home Teacher came across in the course of her work.

THEY were both over eighty and Mrs. A.'s sight was very dim. A young soldier called Jim was billeted on them. They welcomed him as a son, invited him to sit by their fire and listen to the wireless, and slipped a little present into his hand when he went up North on leave. He, in return, made them tea at all hours of the day and night; rang up the doctor and fetched the medicine; posted letters, ordered the meat; brought up the coal and was generally one of the family.

A few days before the regiment was to leave the village, he presented his friends with a photograph in which he was one of a group. The old lady peered at it, narrowing her eyes and holding it so near that her nose rested on it. "It's no good, Jim," she said at last, "the poor old eyes have given out; I can't see anything."

The boy stood by disappointed and anxious. "I'll get you one you *can* see," he muttered.

Two days after, he burst in, a broad smile on his round, good-natured face. "What about this?" and he handed a fine cabinet-size photograph to them. They dispatched him immediately to phone for the meat, and as soon as he had gone the old man handed the photograph to his wife together with a strong magnifying glass. She peered, she twisted, she held it away. "It's no good, dear," she said sadly, "and to think of that boy spending his money to please me."

"It's good—jolly good, too," commented

Mr. A., taking it to the window. "The same old smile, cap tilted over one eye; it's him to the life!"

Jim was soon back again and, slamming the door behind him, he began at once: "Do you like it—can you see it, Mum?"

"Splendid, Jim, splendid! Just your smile and your cap tilted over one eye—it's you to the life. But you shouldn't have spent all that money."

"I don't care as long as you can see it," he said triumphantly. "Fancy you noticing the way I've got my hat on too. Golly, your eyes can't be too bad, can they?"

The village was up and out by 5.30 next morning, standing at the gates, waiting for the boys to march past. Mr. and Mrs. A. were there, he slim and small, she big and motherly. "Now," she said, "don't forget as soon as Jim is nearly level you're to pinch my arm so that I'll wave my handkerchief at the right time."

That was the last glimpse Jim had of them. Standing close together, his fingers round her arm, pressing it hard (to give her courage, he thought), and she smiling and waving her handkerchief right at him.

"She's not too bad," he comforted himself; "she *can't* be," and as he marched away, all unknowing, to the horror and glory of Dunkirk, he threw back his head and began to sing with the rest.

A. I. B.

DOMICILIARY ASSISTANCE

Review of the Present Position in the Southern Regional and Western Counties Areas

THE increased cost of living due to the war has necessitated revision of schemes of relief for the aged and the unemployable.

Local authorities have accordingly introduced in many parts of the country improved financial and general conditions for the benefit of blind people and their dependants.

We are indebted to the Southern Regional Association for the Blind and the Western Counties Association for the Blind respectively for the two following statements relative to the present condition of domiciliary assistance to the blind in the Southern Regional and Western Counties areas, which cover the southern half of the country. We hope to include in next month's issue of *THE NEW BEACON* similar statements relative to the Northern Counties and to Wales.

* * *

Brief Summary of Increases granted, as a result of the rise in the Cost of Living, by Local Authorities in the area covered by the Southern Regional Association for the Blind, to Unemployable Blind Persons as at the end of 1940.

The latest cost of living index figure given on December 1st last by the Ministry of Labour is 195, as against that of 155 on the outbreak of war in September, 1939. Several Local Authorities in the area covered by the Southern Regional have increased their rates of domiciliary assistance to unemployable blind persons to meet this rise in the cost of living. One authority has given an increase of 2s. to as much as 4s. per week, according to need. Another 3s. Three have given 2s. 6d. a week. 1s. to 2s. is the most general rate of increase, 12 authorities having given an increase of 1s. a week, three 1s. 6d. and four 2s. a week. Some have adopted a sliding scale. In two instances a bonus of 2d. for every two points increase above the cost of living index figure of 155 has been given. In another 2½ per cent. is given for every four points increase, while one authority has varied from paying 2s. a week for householders and 1s. a week for single necessitous blind persons to 1s. 2d. and 7d. respectively for every 10 points increase. This, as will be seen, means a fairly substantial increase. Another Authority has granted an extra 3d. for each dependant wife and 1d. for each child for every five points increase. Most Authorities have given something in the way of an increase for dependants but this is the only

Authority which has increased the allowances for dependants only.

The figures given above regarding the different rates of increase are those per single blind person per week, unless otherwise stated. Two or three Authorities have preferred to increase the maximum rate of domiciliary assistance rather than regard this as a bonus granted against the war cost of living increase. The reasons for this are obvious, and there are arguments for and against, but in one or two cases it has meant the revision of the regulations for the provision of domiciliary assistance to unemployable and other necessitous blind persons greatly to their benefit. One Authority while recognising the need for increased allowances has thought it better to grant authority to those concerned to incur additional expenditure on increased allowances where necessary, instead of amending the scale.

Home Workers have not been omitted from the general scheme of increase and one or two Blind Persons Acts Committees have increased the scale of augmentation and seen that increased family allowances and cost of living bonus granted to the unemployable blind is adopted in respect of home workers as well.

* * *

Statement of the present position in the Western Counties Area concerning Domiciliary Assistance for Unemployable Blind.

Since the passing of the 1940 Act, whereby the conditions for Old Age Pensioners and Widows have been much improved, the existing schemes, drawn up by the Local Authorities, have been amended with a view to bringing all scales for relief at least into line with the assistance granted to sighted pensioners under the 1940 Act.

In the five cities, Bath, Bristol, Exeter, Gloucester and Plymouth the scales for relief were already roughly as much as that for Assistance Board, some above that scale. It is understood that since July, 1940, in most of the cities a further increase has been granted with a view to meeting the rise in cost of living.

In the six counties a great deal had already been done by the several County Associations for Blind in co-operation with the officials of the Local Authorities concerning the amendment of existing schemes.

Dorset County Council approved a scheme

which came into force March 5th, 1939, whereby the assistance to blind was raised above the amount then granted by the Assistance Board, plus reasonable addition for rent. The County Council recommended also, that additional help should be granted according to their approved scale to meet the rise in "cost of living," this to be readjusted from time to time.

Cornwall County Council approved a carefully prepared scheme February 27th, 1940. These regulations were put into action on April 1st, 1940, the benefits amount roughly to those granted by the Assistance Board. The County Council has agreed since to increased assistance being given at the discretion of the Case Committee, this not to exceed 15 per cent. This further benefit was sent to the individual blind as from August 3rd, 1940.

In Gloucestershire the scale had already been raised to 17s. 6d. a week. As from July 1st, 1940, the County Council approved a further increase to £1 a week including existing means, plus reasonable rent. An amended scheme is being prepared.

Devon County Council approved an amended scheme which came into force on September 28th,

1940. Their regulations do not provide assistance as yet on quite such a generous basis as sighted pensioners receive. As in all the other areas, reasonable rent is considered in addition.

Somerset County Council approved an amended scheme drawn up by members of Somerset County Association in co-operation with County Council officials on October 9th, 1940. This scheme provides that all blind be accepted as pensioners to be dealt with on the same scale, at least, as that for Supplementary Pensions (Old Age and Widows' Pensions Act, 1940). The increased benefits to date back to August 3rd, 1940. Special cases of need may be granted additional help, each case to be considered on its merits by the Case Committee.

Wiltshire County Council has increased benefits for blind recently. They are considering the matter further with a view to amending the original scheme. This matter has only been delayed owing to the Council having been pressed to move into the newly built (still unfinished) County Council Offices at short notice; their old buildings have been requisitioned by the Government. As in all the other areas rent is taken into consideration in Wiltshire.

A MESSAGE FROM A SOUTH AFRICAN MASSEUR

THE following cheery and delightful message of goodwill was received just before Christmas by Mrs. F. Chaplin-Hall, Secretary of the National Institute's School of Massage, from a former student, Mr. G. S. Schermbrucker, who is now in practice as a masseur at Cape Town, South Africa:—

"To you and the staff of the good old 'Massage Dept. and School' I send my sincere greetings for a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. A merry Christmas is perhaps hoping for a lot under present circumstances, but just as Hitler, by his bombs and machine-guns, has failed to break the spirit of the old 'Bulldog,' so he will fail to rob the English Christmas of its

traditional homely gaiety. There is at least one certainty about this Christmas, and that is that you in England have a much greater likelihood of having the old plum pudding than the misguided Germans, and the 'Ersatz' which will be dished out to them will cause a measure of indigestion which will make them wonder if this Hitler bloke is all that he's cracked up to be. In any event, from all parts of the world to which the N.I.B. has sent its students from the Massage School, there will be very special thoughts for all of you at the Alma Mater this Christmas, and all will share the devout hope that the new year will bring victory and the end of the war. Good luck, and a Merry Christmas."

OBITUARY

We much regret to announce the death of:—

Councillor T. Sylvester Stone, of Grimsby. He was well known for the great help he gave to the blind people of the town, as Chairman and Hon. Treasurer of the Grimsby Society for the Blind.

James Arthur Pinn, of Exeter, aged 71. He was Superintendent of the West of England

Blind Institution, Exeter, for 17 years, until his retirement in 1930. He was previously headmaster of a local elementary school, and was organist at St. Olave's Church, Exeter.

William Carrodus Birkett, of Worthing, aged 61. He had been on the Town Council since 1931 and was Mayor of Worthing in 1937-38, and Chairman of the Management Committee of the Worthing Home for the Blind.

BOOKS FOR THE AMERICAN BLIND

By W. McG. EAGAR

THE NEW BEACON contains many references to the work of our American friends engaged in blind welfare. Our contacts, happily, are close and cordial, and we look forward keenly among the blessings of peace to the renewal of the visits which have been paid to us and by us to them.

The recent publication by the Library of Congress, Washington, of a brochure on "Books for the Adult Blind including the Talking Book machine activity and service for the blind" makes an opportunity of estimating the quantity and quality of American activity, and considering how far what the U.S.A. has done points to further action by us.

A series of laws for the benefit of the blind have of recent years given the Library of Congress a commanding position in American blind welfare. "Books for the Adult Blind" starts with a tribute to the effectiveness of Miss Helen Keller's pleading with the Legislature to provide books which she said are "the eyes of the blind." She added on another occasion:

"There is no law on the statute books compelling people to move up closer on the bench of life to make room for a blind brother, but there is a divine law written on the hearts of men constraining them to make a place for him, not only because he is unfortunate but also because it is his right as a human being to share God's greatest gift, the privilege of man to go forth unto his work. The heaviest burden upon the blind is not blindness but idleness; and they can be relieved of this greater burden."

The Bill for which Helen Keller pleaded was passed in 1930, and the statement now published shows that since 1931 the blind have benefited by the production of 1,329 titles in Braille, 193 in Moon, and 305 Talking Books. The Braille publishers in the States have the very great advantage over us in Great Britain of a large reading public. The 1,329 Braille titles has meant a production of 283,740 volumes, and the 193 Moon titles has resulted in 35,907 volumes. Similarly the 305 Talking Book titles has meant the distribution of 46,857 records. The present policy of the Library of

Congress seems to have resulted in the production of something like 200 titles a year in Braille and 20 to 25 in Moon. Distribution of books in raised types is to the 27 Libraries for the Blind throughout the country. Of the 41,548 volumes distributed in 1938-9, 13,117 were fiction, 14,730 were magazines, 2,394 history, and 3,850 biography, and 1,624 were classified as description, travel and adventure.

Reference is made in "Books for the Adult Blind" to the 1932 Conference in London which adopted the Standard Braille Code. The sympathies of the Library of Congress were "warmly enlisted in favour of uniformity, and indeed, the establishment of the Federal appropriation of books for the blind was one of the principal factors in bringing the question to a head." Immediately on the conclusion of the agreement the Library of Congress's specifications were changed from its previous requirement of Braille Grade 1½ to the new style Braille. The Library has been consistent to this attitude. On the other hand, there are still sources from which considerable "quantities" of books in Grade 1½ enter the libraries, and there are still considerable stocks of Grade 1½ books printed before 1932. Of the 12,203 registered readers of Braille 4,063 are registered for Grades 1 and 1½, but not 2. The situation has caused the library some concern, and although it has been asked to increase the number of books annually produced in Grade 1½ it has no present intention of changing its policy.

Moon readers in the year 1938 constitute approximately 13 per cent. of all readers of embossed types. Of the Moon volumes distributed in the year 1938-9, in total 4,051, just one half were fiction, one quarter were magazines, and the rest were made up of biography, history and religion.

The appropriation by Congress of Talking Books allows for the purchase of 70 books (titles) per annum. Only 36 were produced in the year 1938-9. The reason for the reduction that year is interesting to us. Two welfare agencies had proved their capacity to make Talking Books, and were supplying the needs of Congress. When the "extent of the appropriation excited the desire of commercial recording firms to share our business," one

commercial bidder made a determined effort to secure a contract, "and the lengthy correspondence which resulted, together with extensive testing of samples, and the final reference of the whole matter to the National Bureau of Standards, materially held up our programme of recording." Since then an Act of June 7th 1939 has recognised the prior interest of the non-profit agencies for the blind in the manufacture both of embossed and Talking Books. It provides that the Library of Congress "shall give preference to non-profit institutions or agencies whose activities are primarily concerned with the blind, in all cases where the prices or bids submitted by such institutions or agencies are, by said librarian, under all the circumstances and needs involved, determined to be fair and reasonable."

There is a good deal of interesting technical matter on Talking Books in the report, and a good deal in the story of Congress's action which shows how rapidly ambitions can be translated into legislation at Washington, and how social service can be built up by an accumulation of specific Acts, allotting funds and further funds to a scheme which has won approval. The number of Talking Books put at the disposal of the American blind is very much greater than that which we have been able to reach in England. Readers of the NEW BEACON should know that that is largely due to the fact that the manufacture of Talking Book machines was taken up by the Roosevelt administration as a desirable Works Project to employ blind and other handicapped persons who otherwise would have been out of work. Whether there is or is not an object lesson for us in this fact is a question which we would do well to consider after the war.

It is recorded that the Talking Book project last year employed 140 persons drawn from the relief rolls of New York City, 42 of them being blind, and I may add that when I visited the project in 1937 it was employing a considerable number of deaf, crippled, and otherwise handicapped people. The latest allocation of funds will bring the total of machines produced and distributed to 21,850. The technical developments recorded follow closely on the lines of our own, and in fact both at the National Institute for the Blind and St. Dunstan's we keep in very close contact with the American Foundation for the Blind on all technical matters.

The status of the American Talking Book machines is that they are lent to the blind in every State of the U.S.A., and also in the outlying possessions. It is interestingly recorded that in the four years since the project was initiated only 30 machines had been lost,

9 being stolen, 3 lost in transit, 13 destroyed by fire, and 5 by flood.

Careful consideration has been given to the suggestion that half hour broadcasting periods should be given several times a week for the express benefit of the blind. It is thought that such an arrangement would be a splendid opportunity "of translating to the blind of the United States an appreciation of the cultural values inherent in the material in our collection, in practically all fields of learning. The material in these broadcasts would be simultaneously recorded as Talking Books"; that is an interesting idea, more practical perhaps under American conditions of broadcasting than our own.

One of the handicaps of our American friends in blind welfare is that there is no register for blind persons. No one knows how many blind there are in the States. A firm figure of readers is reached, however, when the libraries through the States report to Washington not merely the number of their registered readers, but actually those who borrow books in a given year. The latest figures show a slight increase in the circulation of both Braille and Moon books, and a much greater increase in Talking Book circulation, viz., 67 per cent. in the last year. Talking Book readers are now more numerous than embossed book readers by 15 per cent. On the other hand, 76 per cent. of the Talking Book readers are not readers of embossed books, and it is assumed in Washington that that means that an entirely new class of readers has been touched by the newer method.

A touch of old-fashionedness, refreshing in its way in streamlined modern America is given by the mention that the Distributing Libraries "are still giving space to 21,523 volumes in raised types mostly New York Point, other than Braille or Moon."

"Books for the Adult Blind" concludes with reports of subsidiary activities. The main interest to us in this country lies in the general review of the situation reached in 1939. This review was written by Mr. M. A. Roberts, whose death was recorded in THE NEW BEACON of August 1940. In a sense it must constitute a memorial to him. One thing stands out, namely, that heavy expenditure has been incurred and great energy has been devoted in the last decade to bring blind welfare in the States, on its cultural and literary side at least, up to the level of that reached in any other country of the world. In this country we hope to maintain our position of having something to tell the Americans and even to teach them, and at the same time to show our eagerness to learn from them in every matter to which they apply their practical and decisive minds.

The New
BEACON
BLIND WORLD

WITH what degree of propriety can we use the convenient term, Blind World? Some blind people have strong objections to it because they consider that it implies a world apart and different from the ordinary everyday world and suggests segregation. But we think that to most people outside it the term Blind World would no more hint at a slant from the normal or a herding together than the term Literary World or Court Circles. Surely the most obvious implication of the term is that there is a sphere of society composed of people whose pursuits and interests are frequently governed by a condition common to them all—the lack of physical sight. The critics may say that this is not so, that merely physical blindness does not beget a community of interest, that there is no closer relationship between people who are unable to see than between people who are unable to taste or people unable to appreciate cricket. But they must admit that, despite their aloofness from it, there is an actual Blind World, even if it is confined to the field of endeavour to lighten the handicap of blindness. In this narrower sense the Blind World means the Blind Welfare World, a world just as professional, technical and definitely objective as the Publishing World or the Printing World.

The Blind World would benefit very materially if those who deny a community of interest amongst the physically sightless would change their views, because many of the blind men and women who object most to being “classed” as blind persons possess a spirit of sturdy independence and a strength of character which, enabling them to burst their own bonds of blindness unaided, would be of sterling value to others less gifted. Doubtless some of these “independents” possess in addition social and financial assets that free them from contact with the cruder forms of help, but similar assets have been possessed by many blind people whose whole energies have been flung into Blind Welfare as a Crusade, with as much intensive purpose as into an ambitious individual career. The Blind World would be poorer beyond calculation without the strength and the service given to it by such men as Sir Arthur Pearson and Sir Beachcroft Towse—men who, if they had so wished, could have lived useful, prosperous and decorative lives afar from the Blind World of the toiling unknown rank and file. But they chose otherwise and devoted all their talents and influence to creating a Blind World of communal endeavour.

Frequently we read in obituary notices of people who have achieved distinction in various ways despite the handicap of blindness and have become well known in academic and business circles. Yet these people are unknown to the Blind—or, to be precise, the Blind Welfare World. Their blind fellows have gained nothing from their talents and their experience, their struggle and their success. They have, with an independence of character which is admirable in its way but which we think is essentially egotistic, ignored one great chance of their blindness—the opening it affords into a rich field of social effort. If they had not done so, the nucleus of every Council, Committee and Governing Body of every section of the Blind World would be blind men and women.

More particularly to-day do we need the women. There should be a Feminist Movement in the Blind World. How many blind women are there serving on the Committees of Institutions? Where are the blind women in executive positions? Contributors to this journal have often shown us that there is no lack of ability or ideas on welfare work amongst blind women, and we are convinced that to many branches of that work women with actual experience of sightlessness could bring a keen insight, a deep understanding, a delicate sympathy and a touch of vivid colour that no mere male could give.

Women, when taking up social work of all descriptions, have often wantonly sacrificed their greatest asset, womanliness, on the altar of pseudo-masculine efficiency. Somehow we imagine that this is what no intelligent blind woman would ever do. She would almost naturally have the vision to cultivate her femininity and use it, just as she would cultivate and use her senses of hearing and touch, to minimise her handicap.

THE EDITOR.

FORGING THE BOND OF FRIENDSHIP

Messages of Goodwill from America to British Blind Welfare

THE goodwill of the people of the United States of America towards the British people in their struggle against the Nazi and Fascist tyrannies needs no emphasis here. It is obvious in every public utterance of American statesmen and in every expression of opinion in the American press, and is yet more evident in the actions which follow the deeds. But we believe our readers will welcome a closer glimpse of the warmth of American feeling towards us. All business or work which, by its nature, constitutes a link between the British and American peoples could afford such a glimpse, and welfare work for the blind is no exception. For many years the relationship between blind welfare in Great Britain and America has been most cordial and helpful. Each of us on either side of the Atlantic has tried to establish all means for the interchange of useful ideas and experience, and to foster every chance of forging an enduring bond of friendship between the British and the American blind.

Since the beginning of the war the National Institute for the Blind has received letters by every mail from Institutions for the Blind in America, anxiously seeking news of the British blind and full of the kindest sentiments. The Secretary-General of the Institute has kindly permitted us to extract from a few representative letters messages which will be warmly appreciated, we believe, by our readers.

From MERLE E. FRAMPTON, *Principal, The New York Institute for the Education of the Blind* :—

"We have a deep-felt sympathy for you and that sympathy means more than mere verbal expression, and we depend upon you to let us know when you need anything. I know that you are proud and we are proud of that fact. But we want to help if we can . . . With cordial best wishes and sincere prayers that you will be spared any injuries in the holocaust."

From A. C. ELLIS, *Superintendent, American Printing House for the Blind* :—

"I have taken the liberty of showing your letters to members of our Board of Trustees whom you met when you were here. We are all hungry for first-hand news from people we know. A word of reassurance from someone who is in the midst of things is most heartening . . . We do comprehend how marvellous the morale of your people is."

From WALTER G. HOLMES, *President and Manager, The Matilda Ziegler Magazine for the Blind* :—

"I haven't anything special to write about, but I do want to tell you how much you dear people there are in my thoughts. Your courage and your bravery are an inspiration to the civilised world."

From GABRIEL FARRELL, *Director, Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind* :—

"During these troubled times we often think of you and the work of the Institute . . . I am glad to learn that so many of your activities are going on as usual. From time to time we have read of the schools which had to go to other places, but we have always admired the spirit in which they seem to carry on wherever they might be. Please be assured that we admire the way in which you are carrying on your work and the people of England their whole national life."

From ROBERT B. IRWIN, *Executive Director, American Foundation for the Blind* :—

"I feel terribly distressed about the news I am getting every day regarding the bombardment of London. I only wish I knew that you and your associates are still safe. It is hard to realise just how you are carrying on."

From LEWIS H. CARRIS, *General Director, National Society for the Prevention of Blindness* :—

"I have thought about you many, many times during the last year. My heart goes out to you and your associates in the present catastrophe. I am greatly in hopes that America will speed up its contribution to the Allies in the worst crisis which civilisation has ever met."

From LUCY A. GOLDTHWAITE, *Librarian for the Blind, New York Public Library* :—

"Letters seem so inadequate in the presence of such a tragedy as war. Nevertheless I'm writing for I so often think of you all at the Institute and wonder how the war has affected the staff . . . I feel there is little I can say when our own skies are so safe but I do want to express our profound sympathy with the British."

From FRANCIS WILLIAM BATES, *Executive Director, American League for the Blind* :—

"My heart and the hearts of every blind man and woman in America is bleeding for our

English cousins. What can we American blind do for you? How can we ease the tension? That is on my mind night and day."

Extracts such as these could be continued indefinitely, all bearing witness of the constant solicitude which our American friends have for us and our work. Their sympathy and interest do not slacken, a fact which can best be exemplified by quoting two cables received by the Secretary-General of the National

Institute immediately after the recent fire-bombing of the city.

"Wondering about your safety after latest dastardly destruction of our common heritage. Hope better times coming."—IRWIN.

"Our thoughts turn constantly to you and Britain. This may be a dark New Year but where love and courage are strong light will return."—HELEN KELLER.

Mr. BEVIN'S WIRELESS FOR THE BLIND APPEAL

ON Christmas Day, 1940, the Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin, M.P., broadcast the following appeal on behalf of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund:—

"Well, Friends, this is a change for me—I am going to make a different kind of appeal to you from any that I have been making for the past seven months. During that period my exhortations have been to managements and workers to produce, produce, produce. But to-night my exhortation to you is to give, and give liberally for a very worthy object, namely, to send your money at this Christmastide to provide wireless sets for the blind.

"On each Christmas night for some years there has been an appeal to you to contribute to this good cause. The first appeal was in 1929 and was made by the present Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, and to-night it has fallen to me to carry on the good work.

"I have satisfied myself that the British Wireless for the Blind Fund has given the blind sets of the most suitable kind at the lowest possible price. It has spent very little in administration—a most important point, I think, in a charity's work. There is still a great need to be met.

"Owing to vicious attacks upon our cities nightly, an appeal this Christmas time presents many difficulties. A number of those who in the days of peace would be at their parties listening to my voice, are in their shelters and so they will not hear me, but will you who do hear me (and I know you are going to give to this Fund) be good enough in addition to become, as it were, agents, and to-morrow remind your friends who were in the shelters of this appeal so that it cannot be said that any disturbance of our normal Christmas Festivities, due to the action of the enemy, caused any loss to our blind friends.

"These contributions are all the more important this year because so many homes have been destroyed and many blind persons have suffered, equally with the rest of the citizens,

and the calls for replacements and succouring them become even more vital.

"We must look ahead too, because as a result of the war the blind population may unfortunately be increased and the task thrown upon the Fund may become even greater as the war progresses, and, indeed after the war.

"It is essential, therefore, not only to keep the current claims met, but to build up reserves for the added liabilities that will follow. So will you please get ready not only to give what you have given in previous years, but to double it, and please do remember my request to act as agent and remind your friends who cannot hear me so that the contributions to the Fund this year will be greater than ever.

"The tragedy of blindness must be known to you all, indeed it must have been brought home to you recently because the almost total black-out we have been experiencing has forcibly shown to many of us the difficulties involved in not being able to see.

"The war, too, has made us realise what the loss of pleasure and amenities really means. But to us with sight that is a temporary phase; it will pass with victory and the lights will shine for us again. Winter will pass and when spring comes we shall sally forth into the sunshine and the country. We shall see the bursting buds and nature unfolding herself; we shall watch its growth into blossom and, later, we shall see the glorious colours of autumn. But the blind have all the inconveniences of the war without the anticipated compensation that we with sight can look forward to. It is permanently denied to them.

"One of my dear friends suffered from blindness. He lost his sight in an unfortunate colliery accident. This was before there was wireless. He had been a great reader. He knew his Bellamy's *Looking Backward*; it had stirred his imagination and after blindness came he used to express regret that the forecast of Bellamy would not be possible in his time. But the wonderful developments of science were

equal to that which the writer had portrayed and my friend lived to hear the wireless and enjoy it. It was gratifying to see the amazing awakening and change and thrill that it brought into his life, and not only into his life but that of the whole home circle. Like so many colliers he was an artist, and the music, the talks, the plays, the lectures by philosophers and scientists and the voices from the wider world opened up to him a new vista and was some compensation for the loss he had suffered as a result of the disaster which had overtaken him.

"There is another very wonderful thing about it—that is, its equality—for the poorest home or the richest mansion gets the same fare, the same knowledge and enlightenment.

"And what can you do better this Christmas time, when probably suffering is brought home to you with greater acuteness, than to want to share such good things as you can enjoy with those who are less favourably placed than yourself? You know, there is far greater joy in giving than receiving if you have the wherewithal to give. That is why you give to your children and your friends and you can get a thrill out of contributing to this Fund because you will know that it is not merely a momentary pleasure you are giving, but a permanent one which is going to bring continuous joy into the life of your blind friends.

"We have all admired the amazing senses that have been developed by our blind friends and the self-effort they have made to overcome their own difficulties, how they have cheerfully minimised their loss with an amazing resourcefulness and capacity. It is not merely their remarkable memory, sense of touch and knowledge of direction that amazes us, but to those who have been intimately associated with them their profound and marvellous mental vision is a source of wonder, and to them the wireless is very often the substitute for the book and offers them great opportunities for further mental development.

"We can go to a football or cricket match or a boxing event, and play or watch sports of all kinds. I have noticed many times when the play is described how our blind friends fill in the gaps by their imagination. Think of the great value of a wireless commentator making realistic a sporting event—and sporting events not only in this country, but from the Dominions and overseas. Yes, look where you will, wireless has become a compensation and a link and it has established a new comradeship in the world, which we want to see this Fund make available to every blind person, equally with ourselves. In fact, having regard to the facilities we sighted people have, a blind person should have 'first priority.'

"Now to get that, we want your money.

"Happily there have been effected many improvements socially for our blind friends. But however much you do there is still more to be done, and there are many things that bring great pleasure with them when they come as gifts from those whose offering is intended to be not one of charity but of love and affection. There is a deep affection among us all for the blind and I want expression given to that in a tangible form.

"I have already said that I appreciate that this is not a usual Christmas, it is overhung with the clouds of war, but out of it has sprung a great comradeship and I know to-night you will show that comradeship by sending me your pennies or pounds or whatever you can afford."

* *

At the time of going to press, over 21,950 listeners have responded to Mr. Bevin's appeal, the sum contributed amounting in total to £10,227.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

A.L.C.M. Diploma.—Miss Irene Lewis, of Pontnewynydd, a pupil at the Glamorgan County Council School for the Blind, Bridgend, was successful at the recent Pianoforte Examination in obtaining the Diploma A.L.C.M. Her teacher, Miss Blake, L.R.A.M., is also blind and is a member of the school staff.

Royal Normal College Shorthand Successes.—The following successes in the Shorthand Examinations of the Royal Society of Arts are announced by the Royal Normal College for the Blind :—

100 words per minute—John Meadley

80 words per minute—

Alan Barton	Joan Hewlett
James Bell	George Hildebrand
Kathleen Best	Myer Lazarus
Kenneth Brooks	Dulcie Roberts
Barbara Bussey	Harold Tait
Olga Ferrando	Elizabeth Turley
John Hehir	Kathleen Wright
Francis Henshaw	

Court Grange Music Successes.—Court Grange School has maintained its usual high standard of attainment in the annual Examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London. Each of the nine entries was successful, and three distinctions and three credits were awarded, two of the distinctions being gained

in Singing, which was taken for the first time by the School. The details are as follows:—

SINGING.			
GRADE I, PRIMARY :			
E. Whatford	..	134/150	<i>dist.</i>
D. Rusher	..	133/150	<i>dist.</i>
PIANO.			
PRELIMINARY :			
I. Birchall	..	89/99	<i>pass</i>
A. Robins	..	86/99	<i>pass</i>
H. Thorpe	..	88/99	<i>pass</i>
PRIMARY, GRADE I :			
R. Drum	..	117/150	<i>pass</i>
L. Pelham	..	123/150	<i>credit</i>
ELEMENTARY, GRADE II :			
T. Allison	..	132/150	<i>dist.</i>
LOWER, GRADE IV :			
E. Whatford	..	120/150	<i>credit</i>
ADVANCED, GRADE VII :			
R. Eves	..	123/150	<i>credit</i>

Their teacher, Mr. B. Slee, L.R.A.M., A.L.C.M., A.T.C.L., is himself blind and was trained at the Royal Normal College. It is interesting to note that the examiner was Mr. Lloyd Powell, who was tutor to Mr. Alec Templeton, the famous blind pianist who has achieved fame in America.

Certificate of Merit for Blind Post Ranger.—Miss Sannie Malan, a member of the Blind Post Rangers of the Girl Guide Association at Johannesburg, has received a certificate of merit, signed by Lady Baden-Powell, for making in Braille three accurate copies of parts of the Bible in Urdu, Spanish and Portuguese.

Blind Boy Pianist Broadcasts.—Sam Bennie, the Edgware blind boy pianist, again broadcast at mid-day on December 16th. He appeared in an Ensa programme, and included in his selections were his own compositions, "Am I for you?" and "Teasing."

Blind Polish Hero Decorated.—Jan Lasowski, a soldier of the Polish regiment, the Chasseurs de Montagne, has been decorated by General Sikorski, Polish Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief, with the Virtuti Militari, the equivalent of the British V.C., for conspicuous bravery in the engagement at Narvik, during which he was totally blinded.

He temporarily rejoined his unit somewhere in the British Isles, but is now going to a training centre to resume his education. He is learning English, Braille and several crafts.

Blind Domino Champion.—Competing at Seaton Miners' Welfare open Domino contest last month, John L. Watson, a blind expert, had a field day, when he took the first and third prizes. There was a large entry.

West of England School Music Successes.—The following pupils of the West of England School for the Blind were successful at the recent examination in pianoforte playing:—

GRADE I. Pamela Stephens (Pass).

GRADE 2. Joy Hodge (Credit).
GRADE 3. Patricia Jarvis (Credit).
Josephine Downer (Credit).
GRADE 4. Stella Thorpe (Pass).
Peter Nason (Pass).
GRADE 5. Audrey Hambly (Pass).
GRADE 6. Audrey Frood (Pass).

The pupils were taught by Mr. F. Selby, F.R.C.O., the school music master. Part of the examination was held during an "Alert."

Blind New South Wales M.P.—Mr. D. B. Hunter is the first blind man to be elected to Parliament in New South Wales, Australia. "I am come among you as a stranger, and all the more strange because I cannot see you," he said in the Legislative Assembly at Sydney recently. A full house applauded his suggestion that the time was ripe for the State to compel the parents of children who were deaf, blind or dumb to see that they went to school and were given a chance in life.

Blind Woman's Spitfire Doll.—To aid the *South Wales Argus* Chepstow Spitfire Fund, Mrs. Lodge, a blind woman of Llanvair Discoed, made, dressed, and gave a doll, beautifully turned out as a bride.

M.O.I. Blind Lecturer.—In the series of lectures arranged last month by the Ministry of Information in Paignton and Torquay, the speaker was Mr. C. M. McInnes, who is totally blind. His subject was "The Empire at War." He is described in the press as an amazing speaker who gives his lectures with great fluency.

The Expert Potato Peeler.—This is an attempted achievement, but the attempt is an achievement in itself. A blind man tapped his way into a Toronto Recruiting Office—and did his utmost to tap his way into the Canadian Active Service Force. "I am very good at peeling potatoes," he pleaded, "and if you will give me that to do it will release an able-bodied man to fight." The officer regretfully turned down the applicant, but remarked: "This is the type of British determination the Germans don't understand."

Swiss Cottage Music Successes.—Mr. Sinclair Logan, Director of Music at Swiss Cottage School for the Blind, is to be congratulated on the success of his pupils in piano playing at the Autumn Examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London, the Examiner being Ernest Read, F.R.A.M., Hon. R.C.M.

GRADE I. Roy Double (Distinction).
Elizabeth Hayes (Credit).
GRADE 2. Bettie Ames (Credit).
GRADE 3. Victor Crawford (Distinction).
GRADE 6. Freda Hunter (Distinction).
Vivian Sivyver (Credit).
GRADE 7. Sidney Bryant (Distinction).

PERSONALIA

The following names, well known to all concerned in Blind Welfare, appear in the New Year's Honours List :—

Knights Bachelor.—Captain ELIAS WYNNE CEMLYN-JONES, Alderman, Anglesey C.C. For public services in Anglesey.

O.B.E.—E. W. SCORER, County Clerk and A.R.P. Cont., Parts of Lindsey; Miss W. F. BOYD-ROCHFORD, Matron of St. Dunstan's.

C.B.E.—E. M. RICH, lately Chief Education Officer, L.C.C.

M.B.E.—Miss JANE LOUISA KING, Hon. Secretary of the Western Counties Association for the Blind.

* * *

CARL GILBERT HARDEBECK, famous blind composer of Irish music, who has brought Irish airs into the concert hall, the schoolroom and the home, spent his 71st birthday last month, at his home in Botanic Avenue, Dublin, arranging old Donegal songs for publication. Mr. Sean Nelson, Lecturer in Irish Music, University College, Cork, recently expressed regret that none of the universities has recognised the talent of Professor Hardebeck. He was Professor of Music at University College from 1919, when he left Belfast, until about 1923, and also gave a course of lectures at Trinity College.

* * *

Mr. J. HANKIN, Acting Secretary, Southampton Association for the Welfare of the Blind, has, with the Committee's permission, volunteered for service in the Royal Air Force and reported for service on 6th January. Until his return, the Rev. ALBERT R. COOPER has been appointed Secretary to the Association.

* * *

The following Staff appointments at the Home of Recovery, "Long Meadow," Goring-on-Thames, have been made by the National Institute for the Blind :—

MISS MARY MOON has been appointed Matron. She is a State Registered Nurse and holds the St. George's Hospital, London, Certificate, the Certificate of the General Lying-In Hospital, London, and the Housekeeping Certificate of the Royal Infirmary, Oldham. She has also had Secretarial training and has taken a Course of Dietetics at the London College of Dietetics. She has had wide and varied experience at home and abroad and for two years was Matron of the Coptic Hospital at Cairo.

MISS W. STIVEN has been appointed Social

Worker. She holds the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind and the City and Guilds' Final Certificate in Hand Embroidery. For five years she was with the Metropolitan Society for the Blind as a Home Teacher, she has done Infant Work in Touraine and for the last six years has been Assistant Supervisor at Wood Green Occupation Centre.

MR. GERALD BROMLEY has been appointed Tutor. He was educated at Worcester College for the Blind and at Oxford University. He is a skilled Brailist and a specialist in languages, and has been a proof reader at the National Library for the Blind.

* * *

MR. and MRS. W. T. F. INDER have been appointed by the National Institute for the Blind to act as host and hostess at the Institute's House of Rest at Bigbury-on-Sea. Mr. Inder, who is blind, is a music teacher and piano tuner by profession.

REVIEWS REPORTS

Halifax Society for the Blind.—The Society, which cares for nearly 500 blind persons in Halifax and part of the West Riding, is able to report that its workshops were, at the time of writing, working at full pressure, largely owing to Government orders, and even having difficulty in meeting the demands made upon them. The Report embodies an appeal to its seeing readers to give all possible help to blind persons in air-raids, and contains the comforting reminder: "Please remember always that the bark of an air-raid is worse than its bite."

Greater London Fund for the Blind.—The work of the Fund has naturally been much hampered in the past year by wartime conditions, and several important events had to be cancelled, including the Hallowe'en and December Balls planned by the Ladies' Social Committee. A Gift Night was generously allowed by the Covent Garden Opera House Dances and a Mi-Carême party held at Claridge's.

The Committee, realising the problems war must bring, decided to appoint a special Appeals Organiser, who should keep the cause of blind welfare before the London public and take any advantage of favourable opportunities that might arise for money-raising.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

Dance :		s.	d.
18243	Carr, M., and Popplewell, J. Until You fall in Love, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	o	6
18245	Gay, N. All over the Place, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	o	6
18244	Hughes, J., and Lake, F. Bless 'em all, <i>Song-Waltz</i> ..	o	6
18246	Warren, H. Devil May Care, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	o	6

BRAILLE BOOKS.

The prices represent the actual cost of production. Blind residents in any part of the British Empire are charged one-third of the quoted price.

Note.—All the following books and pamphlets are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed, paper covers, unless otherwise stated. Books are available in cloth boards at 1s. 10d. net per volume extra, or in stiff covers at 1s. net per volume extra.

Braille Pandas :

- 18275-6. No. 34. Europe in Chains, by Paul Einzig. 2 vols. 6d. each volume net.
18278-80. No. 35. One, Two, Buckle my Shoe, by Agatha Christie. 3 vols. 6d. each volume net.

Education—English :

- 18100-3. Outline History of English Literature, by W. H. Hudson. 4 vols. 6s. per vol. F232.

Fiction :

- 18110-2. Death to the Spy, by Bernard Newman. 3 vols. 6s. 6d. per vol. F204.

Miscellaneous :

- Map of Eastern Mediterranean with Key. Pamphlet. (No cover.) 1d. net. E.4.

ALMANACK, 1941.

By a most unfortunate error on the part of the binders, the Almanack, which this year is fitted with the "Spirax" wire coil, has been bound along the top edge instead of down the left-hand side. We are arranging to have re-bound, free of charge, any copies returned to us by customers and very much regret the inconvenience caused.—National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W. 1.

MOON BOOKS.

- 4453-7. Gunman's Gold, by Max Brand. 5 vols. (Library of Congress Publication.)
4487. Twelve Carols (Christmas). Second Series. Small Pamphlet. Price 6d.

NEW APPARATUS.

WATCHES.

Silver Braille Pocket Watch.—A further supply of these has been received from Switzerland. Owing to the fluctuation in the value of the Swiss Franc and the addition of the Purchase Tax, the price of this time-piece has now been fixed at £4. 15s. 0d. each.

Gentleman's Silver Repeater Watches.—There is still a limited stock of these minute and quarter watches at the following prices :—

Silver Minute Repeater	£6 16 6
Silver Quarter Repeater	£5 0 6

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Biography :	Vols.
The Tranquil Heart (Portrait of Giovanni Boccaccio), by Catherine Carswell	4

Classics :	Vols.
Cicero. Oration against Cataline, ed. Wilkins ..	3
Seneca. Epistolae Morales	9

English Literature :

Tillyard, E. M. W., and Lewis, G. S. Personal Heresy	2
Kenmare, Dallas. Browning and Modern Thought	3
Murray, Gilbert. Essays in Honour of	4

Essays and Belles Lettres :

McDowall, A. A Detached Observer—Essays and Sketches	4
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History :

Fortescue, J. The Governance of England : the difference between an absolute and a limited monarchy	7
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Law :

Strahan's Digest of Equity (ed. 1939)	10
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Miscellaneous :

Astor, Viscount, and Rowntree, B. S. British Agriculture—Principles of Future Policy—Report of Enquiry	4
Fletcher, F. After Many Days. (A Schoolmaster's Memories)	4

Theology :

ed. Matthews, W. R. The Christian Faith ..	4
Weatherhead, L. D. It Happened in Palestine ..	3

TALKING BOOK LIBRARY.

Talking Books recorded by the American Foundation for the Blind and circulated by the Talking Book Library :—

Fiction :

	Records
Bailey, Temple. The Trumpeter Swan ..	15
Conrad, Joseph. The Arrow of Gold ..	18
Dumas, Alexandre. The Three Musketeers. Part I	20
Roberts, Kenneth. Captain Caution ..	15
Roche, Mazo de la. Whiteoaks of Jalna ..	25
Rosman, A. G. Visitors to Hugo ..	13
Sabatini, Raphael. The Historical Nights Entertainments (3rd series)	16
Tolstoy, L. Anna Karenina. Parts I and II ..	19

Non-Fiction :

James, W. The Philosophy of William James ..	18
Lamb, H. The Crusades	19

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

31st December, 1940.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington	2
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Southport	5
Three applications under consideration, Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate ..	1
HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.	
Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield	4
Thomas Briggs Lomas Home, Glensanda, Rhyll	—

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

SPECIAL NOTICE TO HOME TEACHERS: Those awarded the Diploma prior to 1932, and who desire a Refresher Course in Braille, are invited to apply to H. N. Vickerstaff (as above) for particulars. (Stamp for reply.)

FOR SALE.

Two 36in. 10 gauge Dubied Hand Frame Knitter. One 33in. 7 gauge Harrison Hand Frame Knitter. 6 Spindle Winder, with motor. Singer's Overlock, with motor. 40 Large "Jumbo" Bobbins. Write "A. C.," c/o Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, W. 1.

WORK FOR THE BLIND.—The Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind invites applications for the post of SECRETARY, working from Winchester. Experience of social and welfare work for the blind and general organisation essential. Salary £250 to £320, according to qualifications. Age not above 40. For further information apply to H.A.C.B., 81, North Walls, Winchester.

BRAILLE CLASSES FOR WAR WORKERS.

The National Institute for the Blind is hoping to start its second session of Braille Classes for persons who have joined its Register of War Workers. Equipment will be provided and certificates of proficiency given on completion of the Course. Classes will be held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2.30 to 3.30, and on Tuesdays from 4 to 5. For further details apply to Mrs. Bendit, c/o National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W. 1.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind: Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

The National Institute for the Blind is prepared to receive applications from blind people of the professional classes, for whose benefit has been given "Arno", Ventnor, Isle of Wight. It is particularly intended that accommodation at "Arno" should be available for married couples one of whom is blind. The fee would be £2 per week per head, with a reduction to £3 per week for a married couple. The Institute would give assistance to suitable applicants if necessary.

Single guests and married couples will have a bedroom to themselves. "Arno" is situated in a quiet residential part of Ventnor; it has a charming garden of its own and immediate access to public gardens of great beauty close to the sea.

Apply Sec. Gen., 224, Gt. Portland St., W. 1.

London County Council: Home Visitors (Women) of the Blind required. 60s. by 4s. to 88s. a week, plus a temporary addition (at present) of 5s. a week. Candidates should have Home Teaching Certificate of College of Teachers of the Blind, with experience of social welfare work, good education and address, ability to prepare reports, power of discernment and adaptability. Candidates not in possession of above certificate will, if appointed, be required to obtain it within two years from date of engagement.

Application Forms (with full particulars) are obtainable from Clerk of the Council, County Hall, S.E. 1 (send stamped addressed foolscap envelope), and are returnable by 12th February, 1941. Canvassing disqualifies.

BOSTON AND HOLLAND BLIND SOCIETY.

A sighted, certificated female Home Teacher is required. Salary £156 per annum plus War Bonus, if certificated. Apply stating age, qualifications and experience with copies of two testimonials by January 24th to the Secretary, 25, Pen Street, Boston, Lincs.



By kind permission of the Evening Standard Co., Ltd., and Mr. David Low.

BRAILLE PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 34.—Europe in Chains, by Paul Elnzig. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

Gives the reader an idea how Nazi conquest affects the bread-and-butter of the ordinary man in the countries defeated by or surrendered to Germany—Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Scandinavian States, the Low Countries and France—and shows how the nations are condemned to slow starvation or to slave labour for the benefit of the conquerors.

No. 35.—One, Two, Buckle My Shoe, by Agatha Christie. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

The latest problem solved by the great Hercule Poirot, which begins in the dentist's chair.

No. 36.—Two Union of Democratic Control Pamphlets. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

These two pamphlets, "Why France Fell" and "The Near and Middle East," are exceptionally clear and informative. The first analyses the causes of the French collapse and deduces the lessons that may be learned from it by those who wish to lay the foundations of a new social and international order. The second is a concise guide to Near and Middle East conditions and problems, which are both complicated and unfamiliar.

Possessors of Braille Pandas bound in the old way can have the volumes rebound in the present "Spirax" binding at a cost of 4d. per volume.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

The New BEACON

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SOME EVACUATION PROBLEMS

THE Annual Report of the Wiltshire Association for the Blind for 1938-39 contained an interesting paragraph dealing with evacuation. Two days before the outbreak of the war, just over 300 blind persons arrived in the county; and, through the courtesy of the Secretary of the Association, we have been given certain details supplementary to those given in the Report, which afford an interesting picture of how the problems of evacuation were tackled in the area.

Two houses had been prepared beforehand, one to house 20, and the other 25 guests. Two others were requisitioned, one of which accommodated 50 and the other 47 of the new arrivals. Private billets were found for the rest of the visitors. District representatives and home teachers throughout the area set to work at once, and arranged transport to billets, following this up in the weeks after evacuation with visiting and readjustments of all kinds. One unforeseen difficulty was that the contingent sent to Wiltshire included a number of orthodox Jews, for whom special arrangements for catering had to be made.

"Did they settle down well?" was a query on the questionnaire sent to the Wiltshire Association; and "Not really" the Secretary's honest reply—a reply which we suspect has been echoed in most reception areas up and down the country, in spite of the smooth things we hear on broadcast programmes. It is, of course, not surprising, and the reasons given are convincing. Rent problems worried not a few, some were nervous and many were homesick. Perhaps the big open spaces of Wiltshire seemed draughty after the cosiness of the New Cut.

Evacuation from our large towns had been in the air for at least twelve months before war came, and it is surprising therefore that the Societies from which the blind evacuees came seem to have furnished no form of case-paper, indicating the type of home that had been left, for the guidance of the billeting officers. How could it be expected that evacuation would have even a qualified success in such circumstances? That a person is blind no doubt tells us something about him; but it is very little. Is he a mattress-maker or a masseur, an Anglican or an Atheist, a Communist or Conservative, a tippler or teetotaler, a saint or sinner? These are questions quite as important from the point of view of the billeting officer.

Experience teaches, and as a result of her experiences the Secretary of the Association was able to make the following suggestions for the guidance of those responsible for sending

blind persons to reception areas on any future occasion :—

1. They should be sent in classified groups, and the number in each group should be arranged beforehand by the reception and evacuation authorities, and strictly adhered to. It is difficult to imagine which is the more trying for the reception Committee; to be told that 30 people are to be provided for, and then to be confronted with a coach-load of 40, or to find, with great trouble, 40 billets, and to be given only 25 people to occupy them. The classified groups should include :—

(a) The sick and infirm. For these appropriate institutions should be found, as they involve too much responsibility for the ordinary housewife to be expected to care for them.

(b) Nationality and religion should be taken into account, where these make it difficult for the blind person to fit into the ordinary home, as in the case of orthodox Jews.

(c) Those who are problem cases (*e.g.*, who are not clean in their habits, fond of drink, temperamentally unstable) should be sent to Institutions, as they are not suited for ordinary home-life.

2. Every evacuee should be medically examined before being sent away, and whatever treatment is needed should be provided beforehand.

3. Every evacuee should be provided with warm and adequate clothing, including a change of underwear and proper night apparel.

4. The question of payment of rent of the

home or room left behind should be settled before they are sent away. Nothing worries the blind person more than the feeling that he may lose his home during his absence, and the payment of two rents is prohibitive. Of those sent to Wiltshire, about 40 per cent. returned within seven months, nearly all on account of anxiety about their homes and possessions. In my own recollection of that hot September morning on the Saturday before war was declared, the memory stands out of a poor frightened old blind woman in a miserable single room near "The Angel" shaking her head sadly at my refusal to let her take more than hand-luggage with her, as she asked: "But what *will* happen to my things?"

5. An agreed scale of domiciliary assistance in all cases should be decided before evacuation.

On the whole it seems that communal billets are more successful than billeting in private houses, where a blind person probably requires more attention than can generally be given by the housewife, but whether in any circumstances evacuation can be an unqualified success is doubtful. Certainly, unless an area is abnormally dangerous it is better for the blind man or woman who is a member of a family to remain with that family, sharing its dangers, but also sharing the amenities of home-life, and freed from anxiety about those for whom he cares. But for the blind person living alone, or for those who are really unnerved by raids, possibly evacuation is the only solution, and an attempt must be made, in the light of experience, to make it as satisfactory as possible, both for guest and host.



BRITISH WIRELESS FOR THE BLIND FUND

The Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin, M.P., handing to "The Unknown Blind Man" a cheque for £10,200 for the Wireless for the Blind Fund for which he broadcast an appeal on Christmas evening.

(By kind permission of London News Agency Photos Ltd.)

HOME NEWS

Middlesex Association for the Blind.—For some time Labour members of the Middlesex County Council have argued that the distribution of domiciliary assistance to necessitous blind persons should be done directly by the Council's officers, but when at a recent meeting of the Middlesex Education Committee a question was asked, figures were quoted to show that whereas since 1931 the amount of relief distributed has quadrupled, the cost of distribution through the Association has only doubled. In any case, the present does not seem a time for any change to be made, as county officers have their hands full.

Caernarvon County Council and the Blind.—At a recent meeting of the Health Committee of the Council it was reported that a letter had been received from the North Wales Society for the Blind, stating that the existing rate of unemployable blind grants was inadequate; figures were given which showed that the allowances were less in Caernarvonshire than in Flintshire and Denbighshire; in the first-named county the minimum allowance was 15s. while in Flintshire it was 22s. 6d. and in Denbighshire 21s. The matter was referred to the Finance Committee for consideration.

The King and Queen Speak to Sheffield Blind Couple.—In their recent visit to a rest and feeding centre in Sheffield, the King and Queen saw a number of men and women who had been bombed from their homes, among them a blind couple, Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson. The Queen expressed her sympathy with them, and the King smiled when the blind man assured him, "Hitler can send us what he likes. He won't break our spirits. Yon' chap doesn't bother me."

Blind Workers raised £50 for Spitfire Fund.—Blind workers at a Social Centre for the Blind in Oldham have raised the sum of £50 for a Spitfire Fund.

Patriotism!—Two old age pensioners, one blind, one nearly blind, have just had their allowance reduced at their own request.

They are Walter Perkins, 67, a former labourer, and his wife, of Watchet, Somerset, who, finding they could not live on £1 a week plus a small allowance, applied reluctantly to the assistance officer.

They were granted an extra 11s. 6d. but thought it too much with a war on. They asked for it to be reduced to 6s.

The Board reduced the allowance—by 1s.

Nativity Play in Air-raid Shelter.—The performance of a Nativity play in a shelter is probably unique. The last of several performances of such a play took place recently in the shelter of the Blind School, Salusbury Road. It was staged and produced by Miss Lydia Smith, and consisted of a series of beautifully dressed tableaux, with connective readings which made the story of the Nativity really alive. The play was given in each section of the shelter on a different night, and the children are to be congratulated on their skilful and reverent acting.

The proceeds were given to the Royal Society for Teaching and Training the Blind.

War-Blinded Civilians.—Mr. T. L. HORABIN (Lib., North Cornwall), in the House of Commons on 6th February, asked the Minister of Health how many men, women, and children not serving in H.M. Forces have suffered injuries to their eyes as a result of enemy action which will bring them within the accepted definition of blind persons, what arrangement he has made to ensure that local authorities exercise their responsibilities towards all such persons under the Blind Persons Acts, and what machinery has been established to ensure that notification is given to the responsible local authority in each case by the hospital in which any such person is a patient.

He asked also whether the payment he arranged to make to St. Dunstan's for the preliminary rehabilitation of civilian blinded persons while under hospital treatment at St. Dunstan's will be payable to other voluntary organisations undertaking the preliminary rehabilitation of patients in other hospitals, and whether such payments could be extended to the whole period required for rehabilitation and retraining for occupations which can be pursued by blind persons.

MR. MACDONALD, in a written reply, stated: "Up to date 28 civilians—19 men and 9 women—have been reported to me as being in hospital with injuries resulting or likely to result in blindness. I regret that the records in the Ministry do not show if any of these are under 16 years of age. Eleven of these 28 are already at St. Dunstan's. At present the names of all such casualties who are not transferred to St. Dunstan's are being reported to the National Institute for the Blind, who are making provisional arrangements for their rehabilitation and for notification to local authorities, and arrange-

ments to deal with larger numbers, if necessary, are under consideration, in consultation with the appropriate agencies.

"The question of vocational training for a fresh occupation is the concern of the Minister of Labour and National Service, with whom I am in communication on the matter. Payment is made to any hospital in which a civilian blinded as a result of enemy action receives hospital treatment."

Blind Beggars.—At a meeting of the London County Council early this month, MR. BLAKE asked the Chairman of the Committee on the Welfare of the Blind whether his attention had been drawn to the prevalence of blind beggars on the streets of London, including processions of blind musicians led by sighted persons, and whether he had any statement to make on the subject.

MR. C. W. GIBSON: I am well aware of this problem, which is not easy to solve. Although the Council's scheme for the grant of domiciliary assistance to a blind person in respect of his own needs and of the needs of his sighted dependants does not compare unfavourably with the schemes of other local authorities, blind beggars in London often decline assistance from the Council, presumably because they are able to get more money by begging. They can apparently only be dealt with under the vagrancy laws. There are indications that the number of blind beggars in London has diminished since the outbreak of war, and that the public are not now bestowing alms as generously as in pre-war days. The question would solve itself if the public could be brought to realise that the assistance available under the Council's scheme makes begging quite unnecessary.

Street Musicians Fined.—Four London men, described as musicians, two of whom were blind, were fined at Epsom Police Court this month for wilfully obstructing the footway in Epsom High Street. A representative of the Metropolitan Society for the Blind said that one of the blind men received assistance for himself, wife and family, but that the other had always refused training and assistance. Each of the accused was fined 4s.

N.I.B. Students' Library.—From 26th February, the Braille Manuscript Department and the Students' Library of the National Institute for the Blind, apart from the actual circulating department, will be transferred from Headquarters in London to Loxley Grange, Lansdowne Road, Bournemouth. Applications for books already in circulation should be addressed as formerly to 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1, but all other correspondence, books, etc., should be sent direct to Bournemouth.

Certain other of the Institute's Braille Services will be carried on at Bournemouth, but correspondence concerning them should continue to be addressed to Headquarters.

FOREIGN NEWS

Blind Men in German Aircraft Factory.—Blind workers are now employed in the Junkers aircraft factory at Dessau, states a *New York Times* message from Germany.

These blind men, it is stated, make exact measurements to one-thousandth of a millimetre with the same precision as their fellow-workers with good eyesight. The secret is an acoustic measuring that enables the worker to tell the result of his measurement by ear. This apparatus has enabled the Junkers factory to employ many blinded war veterans.

According to the size of the object being measured, adds the *New York Times*, a piston or membrane is used in the apparatus to push up twin columns of mercury at a point adjusted previously, sounding a buzzer or a bell. A deeper or higher note from the buzzer or bell tells the measurer the quality of the piece on which he is working. The measurements are stated to be extremely accurate. Either a loudspeaker or earphones can be used.

Experiments With Blind Spotters in New York.—Under the direction of the blind British pianist, Alec Templeton, an attempt is being made to determine whether blind spotters, with their keen sense of hearing, can pick up the sound of approaching 'planes quicker than men and women who can see. It will be recollected that similar experiments, with somewhat negative results, have already been made in this country.

PERSONALIA

Mrs. WRIGHT BROWN has resigned the Secretaryship of the Hertfordshire Society for the Blind owing to ill-health, and in her place Miss ALDER, of Much Hadham, has been appointed.

* * *

Mr. T. EVELYN SWAIN, After Care Officer (Northern Section) for St. Dunstan's, has retired on account of ill-health.

* * *

We are very glad to hear that MR. EDWARD EVANS, Headmaster and Superintendent of the East Anglian Schools for Blind and Deaf Children, is well on the way to recovery from the serious illness which he has had recently. The circumstances were specially trying as it is not long since Mr. Evans's school was removed from Gorleston-on-Sea to Glyn, Neath, Glamorganshire.

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND LUNCHEON

The Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery's Appeal.

THREE HUNDRED voluntary workers in the cause of Greater London's 13,531 blind were the guests of the Greater London Fund at a luncheon at the Empire Restaurant, Victoria, on Tuesday, 28th January.

The luncheon was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. David A. Abrahams, and had as its objectives the launching of Geranium Day 1941 Campaign, and to make better known the work both of the Fund and the way in which, through its 16 participating societies, the blind are helped to help themselves.

The guest of honour and principal speaker was the Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery, P.C., M.P., Secretary of State for India. The Bishop of London said Grace. Evidence of the civic interest in the Fund's work was demonstrated by the presence of many of the Mayors and Chairmen of Councils throughout the Greater London area. Their practical help, particularly in connection with the annual Geranium Day appeal, is one of the most valuable aids to the fund.

Lunch consisted of modest but ample war-time fare, and was throughout from non-rationed foods, and had received the approval of the Ministry of Food. The restaurant was tastefully decorated throughout in the Geranium Day flower emblems, most of which had been made by the blind. Music was provided by an orchestra supplied through the Musicians' Benevolent Fund, and some excellent items of entertainment were given by the following blind artists: Miss Kemp, Miss Benton, Mr. Burrows, Mr. Falkus, Mr. Reed.

Mr. Amery in his inspiring speech told how Sir Arthur Pearson had founded the fund twenty years ago, and reminded his listeners that his object in founding the fund was to prevent overlapping and competition between all the different societies promoting the welfare of the blind, and substituting a single appeal to distribute money collected in the Greater London area. He emphasised the wider work of the Fund, in that through two of its participating societies, namely, the National Institute and National Library, which centre in London, the blind in nearly all countries of the world receive benefits.



Mr. David A. Abrahams.

In stressing the special appeal for which the luncheon was given, Mr. Amery said that in times like the present there was a tendency, through the calls and needs of the fighting services, and civilian casualties in war, to overlook the many needs of human well-being which call to us consistently in war as in peace; and he hoped that both workers and donors would rally to the cause of the blind in these difficult times.

He paid great tribute to the confident courage and indomitable perseverance shown at all times by the blind, and told of the part they are playing in the national war effort. The workshops of the blind are turning out many of the essential domestic requirements for the services, such as bedding, mattresses, basket work of all kinds, gun mats for the artillery, brushes, etc., thus demonstrating their contribution as producing units, once they have been helped to help themselves.

Finally, he urged the sighted to follow the example of the blind who battle all their lives through the handicap of darkness, without self-pity or complaint. To-day, concluded Mr. Amery, we stand together in this, the greatest struggle the world has ever known; as the defenders of light against darkness.

Mr. David Abrahams recalled that he was a guest at Lord Nuffield's luncheon for the British sailors in September last, on the occasion of the Anchor Day appeal. That effort, he said, was organised by the Greater London Fund for the Blind, and with Lord Nuffield's generosity had resulted in some £40,000 being raised for the welfare of British and Allied seamen. He said that he was inspired by the fact that our blind fellow-citizens, despite their handicap and their own needs, could and did rise to such a splendid effort in the day of our national need. He said he felt that Lord Nuffield had been moved in the same way, for at that luncheon he gave £10,000 to the cause of war blinded.

"Now," said Mr. Abrahams, "I am happy to emulate Lord Nuffield's gesture on behalf of the blind themselves, in giving this luncheon to launch the Geranium Day appeal for April 8th next."

Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., Vice-President of the Fund, in proposing

a vote of thanks to Mr. Abrahams and Mr. Amery, spoke of the urgent needs which necessitated a greater effort than ever before in the Geranium Day appeal this year, and stated that our aim is to raise £20,000.

Mr. Hyde-Thompson, Vice-Chairman, seconded the vote of thanks and stressed the urgent

need for both organisers and sellers for Geranium Day.

At the luncheon Mr. Abrahams handed to the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. H. J. Wagg, a cheque for £200 for the Greater London Fund for the Blind.

DOMICILIARY ASSISTANCE

Review of the Present Position in the Northern Counties and in Wales

IN the last issue of THE NEW BEACON particulars were given of the present condition of domiciliary assistance to the blind in the Southern Regional and Western Counties areas. We are now able through the courtesy of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind and the Wales and Monmouthshire Regional Council for the Blind to include statements relative to these areas.

* * *

Increased payments made to blind persons on account of the advanced cost of living due to the War, in the area of the Northern Counties Association.

In the Association's Annual Report for the year ended 31st March, 1940, a table was published detailing action taken by authorities in the region to provide additional assistance to unemployable blind persons to enable them to meet the increased cost of living due to the war. This showed that of the 51 constituent authorities 45 had already made such provision and the number has now grown to 48; two of the remaining three are at the moment reconsidering the matter (the three authorities concerned make up the income of unemployable blind persons to 25s. per week).

A variety of methods was adopted, e.g., sliding scales and percentage increases, but by far the most general was a flat rate increase, the most frequent being 2s. 6d. per week.

Since the publication of the Report several authorities have made further advances and in the table below the present position is compared with that obtaining in June, 1939:—

Domiciliary Assistance to Unemployable Blind Persons.

No. of Authorities		Amounts to which income made up	
June 1939	January 1941		
—	2	over 30/- per week.	
—	5*	30/- per week.	
—	8†	between 27/6 and 30/- per week.	
14	18	27/6 per week.	
2	7	between 25/- and 27/6 per week	

No. of Authorities		Amounts to which income made up	
June 1939	January 1941		
23	7†*	25/- per week.	
—	2	24/- to 24/11 per week.	
10‡	—	less than 24/- per week.	
2	2	Not stated on merit.	
—	—		
51	51		
—	—		

* 1 with extra winter allowance in addition.

† 1 „ „ rent „ „ „

‡ 2 „ „ „ „ „ „

In each case the amount stated is that to which the income of a single unemployable blind person may be made up. Allowances in respect of dependants have been similarly increased.

In the case of workshop employees and home workers, most authorities in the region have provided for increased payments, a few cases only being without this advantage.

* * *

Statement of the present position in the area of the Wales and Monmouthshire Regional Council for the Blind.

The local authorities in Wales and Monmouthshire have been alive to the need of the blind in their care in the light of changing conditions, and they have, for the most part, made provision for making allowances to meet the increased cost of living. They have also taken into consideration the position of ordinary Old Age Pensioners and the Supplementary Pensions available and have seen to it that the Blind are in no worse a position than the sighted Old Age Pensioners. The unemployable blind have also had additional grants for adult blind and their dependants varying from a shilling for a single person to several shillings where there is a family. In one instance the blind are receiving 20 per cent. above pre-war incomes and the employed are receiving as much as 10s. per week more than they were in September, 1939. The schemes are so varied that only a brief summary is possible, but it can safely be said that there is an upward trend in all directions.

YOUTHFUL MEMORIES

By HELEN CHALMERS, *late Rowing Coach, Sports Club for the Blind, London.*

THE other day, when circumstances in my private life obliged me to relinquish a position I had held for many years in connection with the "dim" world, I found myself looking back on my various associations with blind people in the past and wondering why I had always felt so keenly interested in these unfortunate members of society. What makes certain sighted people interested in the blind to the extent of wanting to do things to help them? Some, of course, have personal reasons for their interest, such as a blind friend or member of their family. But there are others like myself who have no such reasons, yet have a strong desire to devote part of their time to the service of their blind fellows.

My own interest in blindness began very early in life. At the age of three I was seen walking downstairs with my eyes tightly shut, feeling my way with my hand along the banister, and when asked what I was up to I replied importantly, "I'm being blind."

I have two early memories that always remain vivid. I can't have been more than five when my father took me to watch an old blind beggar reading a Braille Bible on the pavement outside Prince's Street Gardens, Edinburgh. I can see that Bible in my mind's eye yet. It was the first time I had ever heard of Braille, which was less well known in those days, and the beggar had collected a crowd of interested watchers.

A little later—months, or maybe a year—we were taking a walk along a country road in the Pyrenees when we came upon a man advancing towards us, with the slow, deliberate tread that is now so familiar. He had a large label across his chest marked *Aveugle* and a little tray with boot laces for sale. I remember my father buying some of the boot laces and speaking to the man kindly in his halting, broken French.

Shortly after the beginning of the last Great War I had my first meeting with a famous blind man known to most readers of THE NEW BEACON. He came into a room where I was standing with my mother and some friends, and as a prelude to our introduction somebody said "It's a little girl." I was furious at this description of myself, being under the delusion that had he not been

told otherwise he would have imagined I was a perfectly grown-up person!

A year or so after this my parents were closely associated with an exhibition of pictures in aid of St. Dunstan's. At the opening ceremony a prominent man of those days gave an account of his recent visit to St. Dunstan's, and his meeting with Sir Arthur Pearson. I stood at the back of the hall, trying to peer through the crowd between me and the platform, listening to every word with a rapt attention which I have sometimes thought since must have been unusual for a child of eight. For days afterwards I imagined to myself the horrors of waking up one morning and finding I couldn't see any more.

As a child I had a particular hatred of intense darkness. Between the Edinburgh railway stations of Waverley and Haymarket is a very long tunnel through which I had often to travel during the last war when the carriages were unlighted. I used to have an absurd fear, as I sat in that inky blackness, that before the train came out into the open again I should be attacked by sudden blindness, and so be left in the blackness for ever. A strange thing about this silly but very real fear is that though it remained with me until I was practically grown up, it vanished completely when I started having regular contact with blind people. I have never been afraid of the dark since.

After the last war a couple of St. Dunstaners set up chicken farms in the neighbourhood of our country home, and my father and I used to visit them in the course of our Sunday afternoon walks. My father had a wonderful feeling of sympathy and understanding for blind people and always got on well with them.

It may have been my meetings with these men, or possibly the earlier associations, that brought the desire to introduce blind characters into my juvenile literary efforts. In a very immature tale, written some time in my early teens, the father of the heroine, after losing his sight on the battlefield, tramped about the countryside recognising his friends by the sense of smell!

Some years later in a slightly, but not much more advanced effort, I produced my blind hero. Though this so-called "novel" seemed, to any of my family who were long-suffering enough to read it, but the crude scribblings of a school-girl, to me it was so deadly serious that I took the

trouble to study the habits and movements of blind people so as to be able to paint a true and life-like picture. On account of this same fictitious young man, who certainly was not worth it, I induced a friend to guide me about London with my eyes shut so that I could get a vague idea of what blindness meant before I wrote my descriptions of his feelings. This "game" was an invaluable help to me later on in my dealings with blind people, and I would recommend it to other sighted workers in the "dim" world as a means of gaining a little understanding. I wonder if any of them would be strong enough, as I must confess I very seldom was, to resist the temptation to cheat and "open up" at the crossings!

It is strange to look back on events after a lapse of years and see how one thing leads on to another. It was indirectly due to my blind hero that I took the job of Lieutenant to the Guide Company of a Blind School. That led to my learning Braille and gradually to other things. I have never lost my keen interest and concern in the blind aroused then but lying dormant for many years before that, and I am sure I never shall.

I have often wondered if any other sighted people who live or work among those deprived of sight share my belief that such contacts make us others more able to find our way about in the dark than we would be normally. I don't know why this should be so, but I have noticed it distinctly, particularly in these black-out days.

Do any of these others know the dream that comes to me so frequently? I am walking along a road or in a garden (it varies slightly) and I am surrounded by lovely scenery, when suddenly I say to myself: "But of course I can't really see all this because I'm blind." There is a hole or some other stumbling block in the road or path ahead of me and I hear myself saying: "I must take care to feel my way gingerly over this." I am actually *looking* at the hole and yet I think I will fall into it because I cannot see!

This may seem a very long account of apparently trivial personal experiences. But I have often thought it would be interesting to know the effects which contacts with blindness have on normally seeing people, and I have recorded my own impressions in the hope that others may follow my example and give us theirs.

EVACUATION OF THE BLIND

The Cinderella Home, Honley, Yorkshire.

FOR many years the Cinderella Home, Honley, re-echoed to the sound of children at play and the chatter of young voices, but September, 1939, unfortunately put an end for the time being to all that as the Society operating the home did not feel able to carry it on in war time. But the Home has now found its war job and once again there is noise and chatter within its walls, only now it is not children, but older people, and they are blind and either taking refuge from cities which have felt the weight of intensive aerial attack, or who very sensibly feel that it is better to be away from danger spots unless one's presence there is assisting the national effort.

The Northern Counties Association for the Blind has always been vitally concerned with the problem of evacuation, and the result of work in this connection has been the acquisition of the necessary premises and equipment enabling it to offer its constituents accommodation for blind people who, by reason of the war, might have to leave their homes in search of peace and safety. A very intensive search, which is still being carried on, has resulted in the first instance in the Cinderella Home, Honley, passing for the time being into the control of the Association, and

its opening as a hostel for blind evacuees.

Living there now are some thirty blind people from Liverpool, Sheffield and Bradford. It is perhaps early to make comment as the Home has only been fully occupied since just after Christmas, and the weather has been anything but conducive to the adoption of country life by confirmed city dwellers, but most of the guests have settled down and, with the coming of Spring, the paths in the surrounding woods will no doubt be explored to the advantage of those prepared to make the effort. One feature of interest is the remarkable way in which the guests have taken to the communal life; and a particularly gratifying sight is the care which those with a very little sight are eager to bestow on those who cannot see at all.

It is hoped that other Homes will be found and opened as many people still require accommodation, and the Association is prepared to undertake the work; but anyone who has sought for suitable premises will know the tremendous difficulties to be faced. In the meantime, however, the fullest use will be made of the Cinderella Home and all possible done to make and keep the guests there a happy community.

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EDUCATION PROCEEDS

THE lists of examination successes at various Schools for the Blind which have been given in recent issues of THE NEW BEACON prove beyond doubt that, despite innumerable difficulties, war conditions have not been permitted to impede the education of blind children. Teachers and all concerned are to be admired for their steadfastness in persisting with their work while supporting the arduous labours and trials of re-organisation—frequently, indeed, complete re-establishment. Several schools have had to trek from county to county in search of the comparative peace that is essential to the well-being of the children.

Self-education has also continued unabated. There has been no falling-off in the demand for Braille textbooks from the National Institute's Students' Library, and it is fortunate that, notwithstanding the many calls to direct war service, there are still enough voluntary Braille writers to produce a steady flow of new Braille manuscript volumes. The removal at the end of this month of the administrative centre of the Library from London to Bournemouth should enable the invaluable work of providing blind students with all the textbooks they require for their studies to be maintained efficiently in most of the eventualities which can be foreseen.

A DOUBLE PATRIOTISM

Another series of items of news appearing recently in this journal calls for comment. The financial support given by the blind citizens of this country to Spitfire Funds is positively amazing. We all know that the mass of our blind fellows are poor people, people who have an endless struggle to make two ends meet. Yet we read continually of Five Pounds and Ten Pounds, Twenty Pounds and even Fifty Pounds, being subscribed by the blind to local Spitfire Funds. Just picture the number of pennies scraped together to form these handsome gifts of pounds and you will get some idea of the patriotic fervour in the minds of the blind population. Their physical disability debars them from the fighting services, but in all other service they are to the fore, striving to their utmost to aid England in her hour of need.

Note, too, the neighbourliness of the blind in banding themselves together for purposes such as this. There is nothing to prevent a blind person from subscribing to a Spitfire or a Red Cross Fund through the usual channels, but the blind people who promote and support a specific Blind Persons' Gift exhibit a double patriotism, a duty towards their country and a duty towards their community. They want to show not only what British men and women can do but what blind British men and women can do. As blind people they have gratefully received help from the sighted workers who have collected coppers in their aid; but as blind people they can contribute also, by the patient collection of coppers, towards the needs of people with sight. Their readiness to do so is an additional proof of the toughness of fibre which is a characteristic of our British blind.

ANOTHER LITERARY COMPETITION

We hope Home Teachers will draw the attention of the blind people they visit to the Literary Competition announced elsewhere in this issue. It is a graceful and timely gesture of the *Jewish Braille Review* of America, which is responsible for the Competition, to open it to the blind of the British Empire. These days afford plenty of material to inspire literary creation, and we feel sure that if duly encouraged, the blind in this country will contribute some worthy efforts. There are some who hold that war is antagonistic to the arts, but if we look back through history we find ample proof to the contrary. The great writer is always a fighter; he wrestles with thought, and from his conflicts and tragedies are born immortal words. How is it that from the battles fought daily against blindness such an insignificant modicum of artistry has emerged? Is it because the teachers of the blind neglect to sharpen their weapons—words?

THE EDITOR.

SUPPLEMENTARY OLD AGE PENSIONS

By BEN PURSE.

IN a previous number of this journal the fact has already been noted that the Supplementary Old Age Pensions Act expressly excludes blind persons from its benefits. After the passing of the Act some controversy began on this subject, and like Rip Van Winkle, the people who should have been concerned at the critical moment were, as usual, sleeping profoundly. They only awoke from their lethargy to discover that the benefits they had hoped to secure from the new Act in respect of aged blind persons could not be made available from that source. Everyone knew that the scales of assistance obtaining in certain areas were and still are altogether inadequate, and apparently certain local authorities hoped, at least in part, to make good these deficiencies from national resources; but they were singularly ill-informed on the subject and only realised what had really happened after the Act was passed. Under the Local Government Act, 1929, supplemented by the Blind Persons Act, 1938, local authorities were made directly responsible for the care of all blind persons residing in their respective areas, and this consideration influenced the State when new legislation was being prepared for the granting of supplementary pensions. It was held that every county or county borough authority possessed adequate powers enabling them, without reference to the State, to increase allowances to the blind whether as employed or unemployed persons. Seeing that a very large number of these people are turned 65 years of age, the local authorities might reasonably be expected to re-examine their scales of assistance, more especially since the passing of the Supplementary Pensions Act, and it should be said in justice to many of them, that they have done so. A number of agencies for the blind have made themselves positively ridiculous, in the manner in which they have frantically protested, and some local authorities who ought to have known better have behaved quite as foolishly. Whatever may have been the merits of the case from the local authority point of view, the time to protest was before the passing of the Act: now it is too late.

Supplementary pensions became payable from 3rd August, 1940, by the Unemployment Assistance Board. Any person who has been granted an old age pension, and any woman of 60 years of age or upwards who has been granted a widow's pension, can apply for a supplementary pension. The payment of such pension is governed by regulations approved by Parliament.

In deciding whether to grant the applicant an increase, the Board must have regard not merely to the requirements of the pensioner, but must take account of the entire means of the household. The manner in which these resources are taken into account will depend upon what they are and whether they belong to the applicant or a near relative or some other person. A fuller explanation of these regulations will be given in a subsequent article. In the meantime it is very necessary that the method of applying for the supplementary pension should be properly understood. The appropriate application form can be obtained at any Post Office, together with a printed envelope addressed to the Unemployment Assistance Board. If the pensioner is in receipt of outdoor relief, a special application form will be supplied by the public assistance authority. When either form has been completed, the probabilities are that an officer of the Unemployment Assistance Board will call for the purpose of discussing in detail the circumstances previously enumerated. Where man and wife residing in the same house are both pensioners, it is unnecessary for the wife to make a separate application. The general calculation of resources will take account of her needs.

When a decision of the Board has been reached, the applicant will be advised, and informed as to the amount of supplementary pension to be granted, if any. Payment will usually be made by means of an order book, but may sometimes take the form of postal drafts, which must be cashed at the post office where the main pension is drawn. It is important that those in receipt of supplementary pensions should present the main pension book as well as the special order book or postal draft.

The Board has no power to provide medical or surgical assistance, drugs or nursing services. Such medical aid is available through the medium of the panel doctor, or alternatively through the usual public health services.

In the event of an applicant being dissatisfied with any decision given by the Unemployment Assistance Board, the Act confers the right of appeal to a special tribunal, and officers of the Board under such circumstances will render all possible help.

Before concluding this article it had better be explained what is meant under the regulations by the term "need of the applicant." This can best be illustrated by the following examples:

(a) An old age pensioner living alone whose

income is less than 19s. 6d. a week would usually be regarded as being in need. Therefore if he had nothing but his old age pension and there were no special circumstances in his case, a supplementary pension of 9s. 6d. a week would be paid in order to bring his total income to 19s. 6d. If he were paying rent of, say, more than 5s. a week for reasonable accommodation, his supplementary pension might be increased. If on the other hand he had some other income in addition to his old age pension, the supplementary pension might be less. Whether and to what extent his income would be taken into account and the supplementary pension reduced, would depend upon the nature of the income; for instance, a superannuation payment of 7s. 6d. a week or less would not be taken into account at all, and if the superannuation were 10s. a week, only 2s. 6d. of it would be taken into account. Again, if the pensioner earned 10s. a week, only 5s. would be taken into account.

(b) If the pensioner is living with his wife who is also a pensioner and there are no other persons

in the household, they will usually be regarded as in need if their joint income is less than 32s. a week, and therefore if they have only their old age pensions, a supplementary pension of 12s would be paid. This amount may be increased if their rent is more than 6s., or reduced if it is less. If they have other sources of income these will be taken into account in much the same way as in the case of a pensioner living alone.

The circumstances of pensioners differ so widely that it would be impossible for Parliament to determine precisely what the supplementary pension should be in each case. The regulations can only establish general standards which the Board must follow unless there are reasons for special treatment. If an applicant considers that such reasons exist in his case, he should submit them to the Board.

In a subsequent article it is proposed to consider the calculation of needs according to the scale laid down in the regulations, and known as the scale allowance.

(To be continued)

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor..

Braille Reading from the Sighted Point of View.

SIR,—I should be glad through the columns of THE NEW BEACON to tell others of the joy that has been brought to me since I have been able to read Braille by touch.

I learnt Braille in order to be able to transcribe; now I want to pass on to others the sense of peace and pleasure that being able to read by touch has brought me.

I can only read slowly at present, but I have been astonished and delighted to discover a deeper meaning in what I read in this way. Quite a new light came to me in the reading of St. John's Gospel. I saw suddenly the beauty that I had somehow missed before. It did not come at all easily to me, but I was fascinated with the thought of being able to take a book under the bedclothes and read independently of the light, as my hands get so cold holding a book up to read in bed: At first it all seemed a hopeless jumble under my fingers, but I persevered, trying a little at a time, and often, and became quite excited when I could make out a whole word. Then quite suddenly one day it seemed to come to me, and I found I could *read*.

It is lovely to sit in the firelight with a book you love, and I feel that for those whose eyes are not strong, too, it would be a wonderful rest. I close my eyes when reading, as it helps me to

concentrate, and it is then that I "see" in a wonderful new way.

Now I have discovered, too, that if I can be patient and persevering enough to read over by touch *every* sheet I transcribe, I can detect little slips that escape me altogether (and big ones too) when trusting only to my eyes, which by that time are apt perhaps to be tired.

Yours, etc.,

Hove.

LOUIE HODGE.

To the Editor.

Blind Skill in Re-knitting.

SIR,—The following report from the Herts Society Home Teacher, Miss Dora Taylor, may, I think, be of interest to readers of THE NEW BEACON :—

" You will be interested to hear that I have received a letter from a local Red Cross Secretary asking me to convey her thanks to the blind who have done work for them. In particular she thanks them for the many garments they have reknit. They were badly knit and misshapen things of all kinds. There were helmets that would never fit anybody, socks that were not pairs and, out of a pair of long stockings knit in oiled wool, we got nearly three pairs of sea-boot stockings."

Yours, etc.,

H. WRIGHT BROWN,
Herts Society for the Blind. Secretary.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Preston Homes for the Blind Music Successes.

—Dame Sybil Thorndike attended the Homes for the Blind, Fulwood, Preston, on the 28th January, and presented certificates to the undermentioned pupils who were successful at the recent Examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music:—

Frank Mytton	..	Grade 1.	(Pass).
Mildred Senior	..	Grade 1.	(Pass).
Joyce Wareing	..	Grade 3.	(Credit).
Doris Whittam	..	Grade 4.	(Credit).

Blind Woman of 80 Knits for the Navy.—

Included in a parcel of 25 garments sent to an adopted destroyer by the people of Alresford, Hampshire, was a pair of sea-boot stockings knitted by a blind woman of 80.

Blind Man as Roof Spotter.—Every night a blind man goes to work as a spotter on the roof of a Brighton factory. Grey-haired Mr. Thomas Dickinson, of Newick Road, North Moulscombe, is a soldier of the last war who lost his sight in Flanders in 1915. But after 25 years' blindness his hearing has become so acute that he can distinguish the throb of a 'plane's engine when it is still far out over the sea. So when factories were urged to provide their own roof spotters Mr. Dickinson offered his services and was given full-time work. "It occurred to me," he explained, "that no roof spotter would be able to see 'planes at night, and that any blind man could do the job."

Three Brave Men.—Three blind men led firemen through the darkness of December's blackest night, through smoke, through tumbled wreckage, when raiders bombed the Sheffield Workshops for the Blind during an attack on the city. Thanks to them the building was only slightly damaged.

Mr. William Rudland, foreman in the factory, said he had never met three braver men.

Immediately the raid began he made his way to the workshops. The men were at band practice in the basement. They finished the piece they were playing and then put their instruments away. They were all calm and most of them went to a safer place.

"Dixon, Lloyd, Walsh and myself, however, decided to keep watch," he said, "and Walsh, who can see very slightly out of one eye, rushed to the lawn and put out one fire."

Blind Boy as Waiter.—A blind boy who has been found employment at Begelly House, the

new county isolation hospital, Pembroke, is doing "a grand job" as a waiter!

Dr. D. H. Pennant, who has concerned himself with the welfare of this boy and his blind brother, told the County Public Health committee at Haverfordwest that the boy was doing very well. He thought further use could be made of blind boys in similar jobs, which would improve their general happiness.

This view was supported by Dr. H. Middleton (County Medical Officer), who said "He does a good job as a waiter. I saw him going round the table. His mental attitude has changed."

Blind Pianist in Films.—Twenty-year-old Sam Bennie, a pianist, who has been blind since the age of seven, will make his film début shortly.

In April, 1938, Sam Bennie won the English and Scottish amateur pianoforte playing contest.

After winning the contest he made his radio début in New Voices in the B.B.C. Band Wagon concert in the same month, and later with Reg. Foort in one of his organ broadcasts. He has since broadcast on many occasions, the latest being on January 7th of this year.

After making his solo broadcast in November, 1938, he met with success after success. In June, 1939, he began a theatre tour with his own concert grand piano and later with his own band of twelve instrumentalists.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Councillor E. S. More, South Croydon, a member of the Croydon Blind Persons Act Committee, and one who, in the words of the Rev. G. Walker who conducted the funeral service, "spent himself in the service of others, not counting his own strength." He had served for years on the Committee of the Croydon Voluntary Association for the Blind, and had rendered great service to the town he loved.

Councillor E. A. G. Wright of Portsmouth, Vice-Chairman of the Blind Persons Act and Local Pensions Committee.

Miss Minnie Knowles, at Brighton, for eleven years Matron of the National Institute for the Blind Home in Queen's Road, Brighton.

She had varied experience in Red Cross and other work before coming to work for the blind, and she retired in 1931 to the great regret of the Institute's Council and of all the women who had been under her care. She gave herself completely to "her girls" and kept in touch with them after the Home had been moved to the vastly better premises it now occupies at Wavertree House, Hove. The secret of her success as Matron, in her sister's words, was that "she loved the women and they loved her."

Mrs. Lili Bendit, a valued voluntary worker at the National Institute for the Blind.

A friend writes as follows:—

I first saw Mrs. Bendit at a course for prospective home teachers, where her eager little face and dark, intent eyes marked her out as someone vivid and alive. After the class we talked, and I heard a little of her background, and how she, her husband and their little girl had found in England an escape from the tyrannies of Nazi rule. She was "interested in the blind," and wanted to fit herself for voluntary service. And how keen she was to learn! First the home teachers' examination, where her reading of Braille and her Professional Knowledge paper put many of the rest of us to shame; then the Braille test of the National Library; then a course of first-aid and home nursing; then learning to drive a car.

Her first thought was for her own people, and she travelled to and from Leatherhead for several months in order to teach English to blind Jewish refugees there. Later, when the war came, she gave her services to the National Institute to train voluntary workers on the Institute's War Register, in preparation for their Braille test. The deaf-blind made a special appeal to her, and she visited them regularly; only two days before she died she went to wish "many happy returns" to a deaf-blind friend, and to take her as a birthday gift a frock for her little girl: "and we had such fun," wrote the deaf-blind woman later. She had a wide circle of Braille correspondents in various parts of the country.

Probably she wore herself out with her eager service, but found in work for other people the greatest comfort so sensitive a woman could know. She did not indulge in self-pity; and perhaps few of her friends realised that her parents had sought refuge from Nazi tyranny by settling in Holland before the war—only to be caught again by the rising tide of Hitlerism. Her gaiety must often have hidden a troubled heart, and those who can guess what the sufferings of the Jewish people must have meant to so generous and affectionate a nature cannot grieve that the cruelty of these times is powerless to touch her any more.

Joseph Crompton, Rochdale, a blind man and the oldest local preacher on the plan of the Rochdale North Methodist Circuit, having preached his first sermon in 1883, when still in the early twenties.

Tom Don, Highgate, a well-known member of the Highgate Presbyterian Church, and a valued worker at the North London Homes for the Blind. Until the Homes were evacuated, Mr. and Mrs. Don visited the residents weekly, and

their friendly interest in them was much appreciated.

Mrs. Smith, Openshaw, one of the first members of the League of Help, and a generous supporter of the Sunshine Homes.

William A. Thompson, West Kirby, a warm friend of the deaf-blind of Fellowship House, Hoylake. He devoted much of his leisure to their service, and on most fine days could be met taking them for walks, and talking to them by means of the manual alphabet.

Bingham Dixon Turner, for some years Chairman of the Chester Society for the Blind, and formerly Rector of Kelvinside Academy and headmaster of Loughborough Grammar School.

Miss Winifred Boyd-Rochfort, O.B.E., at Ovingdean. She had been associated with St. Dunstan's for the past 21 years, first as a V.A.D., then as Assistant Matron, and since the new Convalescent Home was opened at Ovingdean as Matron. In all these posts her services were voluntary. She was beloved by the men, and on one occasion when her name was mentioned at a meeting in connection with the work of St. Dunstan's, the men rose spontaneously, cheered her, and exclaimed, "She's our Angel." In all parts of the Empire there are men who remember her with affection. In the recent New Year's Honours she was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire, and on learning that she was ill, the King caused the Jewel of the Order to be sent to her direct. She came of a well-known sporting family of Westmeath, Ireland, and her brother, the late Capt. George Boyd-Rochfort, won the V.C. in the last war.

Sir Thomas Barclay, at Versailles. He was the oldest member of the British colony of Paris and had lived in or near the French capital since 1876. He had been blind for many years, but he kept abreast of international affairs, to which he devoted his interests, and up to the beginning of war his salons were attended by people of a score of nations. He was probably the last survivor of the real architects of the Entente Cordiale, and its tragic termination last year is said to have preyed on his mind.

Miss Olive Burges, of Hoole, Cheshire, aged 58, for over 27 years Organising Secretary to the Chester and District Blind Welfare Society. Miss Burges met with a motor accident early in December, from which she never really recovered. A fine business woman, with a sympathetic and kindly disposition, she was not only largely responsible for building up the Chester Society but expanded the social side of Blind Welfare by establishing many Social Centres in Chester and the districts around. She was a Member of the National Association of Workshops for the Blind, of the Executive Committee of the College of Teachers of the Blind, and of the

General Council of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind. She had recently been elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for Fellowship House, the Holiday Home for the Deaf Blind at Hoylake.

REVIEWS of REPORTS Home.

Hertfordshire Society for the Blind.—The Report gives an interesting account of the difficulties faced by organisations for the blind when the five first months of the Society's year were rudely broken into by the new problems arising out of war-time conditions. Cancellation of the Geranium Day collection, loss of the Chairman on account of pressing war-time duties, the decision of the County Council to confine the work of the Society's Secretary to statutory duties only, and the new demands made by war-time activities on voluntary workers; all these combined to make hard going for the first months of the war. A new collecting agreement was made with the National Institute by which the Society delegated its collections to the Institute, and tribute is paid in the Report to the "good feeling and practical understanding" shown by the Institute's officials in the negotiations.

After some time, arrangements were made by the County Council to allow of the Society's returning to its former status of agent to the Council, and the Hon. Representatives, to whom the blind owe so much, were once more able to take up their work again. "The negotiators worked with good will, for on both sides it was recognised that the whole structure for the welfare of the blind, which had been built upon a voluntary organisation, would soon collapse if the statutory and voluntary bases continued to be drawn apart."

It is good to read in the Report that throughout the year, with its problem of "unofficial evacuees, who drifted forlornly into the county," the Home Teachers have given of their best; their visits, in the words of the Report, have been "the breath of life to many stricken hearts."

Empire

Association for the Advancement of the Blind, Victoria.—The Association, which was founded 45 years ago, is responsible for a Home for the Blind and also for two Hostels. It also gives general social service to the blind in their own homes, and has in the past year provided medical and dental aid, helped in the provision of hearing-aids, given assistance in times of illness, supplied

wireless sets and arranged social gatherings. A choir of blind singers, a sale of work organised by the blind, and a cricket match played by blind elevens, and watched by the State Governor, have been among the events of the year.

Royal Institution for the Blind, North Adelaide.

—The photograph of a newly-opened hostel for the aged and unemployable blind forms the frontispiece of the Report. It is named Melrose House thus perpetuating the memory of the late Sir John Melrose, a blind man and a warm supporter of the Institution's work. It will accommodate 14 blind men, mainly in single rooms, and judging from its picture is a building flooded with light, air and sunshine. It is both satisfactory and surprising that in spite of war conditions, the subscriptions and donations received by the Institution were in excess of those of the previous year, and the amount paid out to the blind and deaf reached a higher figure than ever before.

Foreign.

New York Institute for the Education of the Blind.—The Institute's Report for 1940 owes much of its attraction to a well-designed cover, showing sensitive hands on a Braille book, and to a delightful selection of photographs. During the past year the Institute has cared for the education of 235 boys and girls, and has tried "to teach blind children to live happily and normally in the present changing world." Scholarship students from India, South Africa, Egypt and other parts of the world, have played their part in broadening the outlook of the children. Research into new methods of teaching, the publication of educational theses, a carefully thought out programme of physical training, and the special care of the deaf-blind have all been features of the year's work. The Institute had in 1940 as in 1939 an exhibit in the New York World Fair, and this provided a valuable opportunity of showing the public what can be done for the blind child by means of education.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.**

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music are in accordance with a revised schedule of prices for Braille music. They represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production, and are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dance:		s.	d.
18247. Gay, N. Oh, Buddy, I'm in Love,	..	..	0 6
Song Fox-Trot.	..	..	..

18248	Gay, N.	Oh, What a Wonderful Night We've had to-night !	<i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	s. d.	o 6
18249	Kern, J.	All the Things You are.	<i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	o 6	o 6
18250	Lee, B. and Mills, N.	Oo, Oo, When I am in Your Arms.	<i>Song Fox-Trot.</i>	o 6	o 6

BRAILLE BOOKS.

The prices represent the actual cost of production. Blind residents in any part of the British Empire are charged one-third of the quoted price.

Note.—All the following books and pamphlets are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed, paper covers, unless otherwise stated. Books are available in cloth boards at 1s. 6d. net per volume extra, or in stiff covers at 1s. net per volume extra.

Braille Pandas :

18281-2 No. 36. Two Union of Democratic Control Pamphlets: "Why France Fell" and "The Near and Middle East." 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

Fiction :

18104-9 Take Courage, by Phyllis Bentley. 6 vols. 6s. 6d. per vol. F.378.

MOON BOOKS.

4458-62 The Burning Court, by J. D. Carr. 5 vols. (Library of Congress Publication.)
4463-9 Huckleberry Finn, by S. L. Clemens. 7 vols. (Library of Congress Publication.)

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

The National Institute regrets that, owing to delay in binding, there is no list of additions this month. The delay is due to the destruction of the binders' premises by enemy action. Fortunately the books themselves have not suffered, and it is hoped to include their titles in next month's list.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND.

35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

It is with great regret that the National Library has been unable to send in the usual list of new books for the months of January and February. This is due to the fact that 338 manuscript volumes were completely destroyed in the disastrous City Fire on December 29th. Voluntary writers are hard at work re-transcribing the volumes which, alas, had to stoke Hitler's fires, and it is hoped that before many months have elapsed the volumes may once again have passed through their many processes and be available for readers. A number of duplicated volumes were also destroyed, and these, too, are being re-copied with all speed.

THE "JEWISH BRAILLE REVIEW" SHORT-STORY COMPETITION.

As part of its tenth anniversary celebration, the *Jewish Braille Review* will hold a short-story competition for the adult blind of the United States, South America and the British Empire.

Separate awards of 25 dollars, 15 dollars and 10 dollars will be given to the authors in each of these areas who, in the opinion of the judges, submit stories of the highest merit.

In addition to the cash prizes, a gold medal to be known as "The J. B. R. Helen Keller Medal for Literary Excellence" will be awarded to the author of one of the three first-prize stories considered by the judges to be of outstanding merit.

Readers of the *Jewish Braille Review* who live in other parts of the world than the designated contest areas just named will, for the purpose of the competition, be classified as if they were citizens of the British Empire.

The first prize story from each competitive region will be translated into English and Spanish for possible publication in the United States and South America.

Efforts will be made on behalf of the prize winners to sell their stories to letterpress periodicals.

The announcement of the final awards will be made in the August issue of the *Jewish Braille Review*; thereafter, in the leading Braille magazines as well as in the general press.

1. Stories from the U.S. and South America must be received by the Editor of the *Jewish Braille Review* on or before May 1st, 1941.
2. Those from the British Empire and other parts of the world on or before June 1st, 1941.
3. Stories should not contain less than 1,500 words nor more than 2,500 words.
4. They must be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, and signed by pen-name only.
5. A sealed envelope containing the full name and address as well as the corresponding pen-name must be enclosed with each manuscript.
6. Each manuscript must be accompanied by a statement, signed by an executive of a welfare organisation for the blind, or clergyman of the community where the contestant resides, certifying that the name given in the sealed envelope is that of the author of the manuscript submitted; also that the author is blind.
7. Competitors are advised to keep carbon copies of their stories, as none can be returned by the *Jewish Braille Review*.
8. The decision of the judges is final.
9. Manuscripts must be addressed to—
J. B. R. TENTH ANNIVERSARY,
P. O. Box 36,
Morris Heights Station,
New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

31st January, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

<i>Name of Home.</i>	<i>Vacancies.</i>
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington	2
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Southport	6
Three applications under consideration,	
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea	2
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring	4

HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield	—
Thomas Briggs Lomas Home, Glensanda, Rhyl	—

EVACUATION ADDRESSES : A REQUEST.

Enquiries as to the temporary addresses of schools, workshops and agencies for the blind reach the National Institute for the Blind daily; and the Editor of the *NEW BEACON* would therefore like in a forthcoming issue to publish the addresses and telephone numbers of as many of these organisations as possible; he would gratefully receive the necessary details for publication, which should reach him not later than February 28th, for insertion in our March issue.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Owing to enemy action, the address of Messrs. Rowley, Pemberton & Co., is now Lloyd's, Leadenhall Street, London, E.C.3. (Temporary telephone number, Avenue 7644).

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

SPECIAL NOTICE TO HOME TEACHERS: Those awarded the Diploma prior to 1932, and who desire a Refresher Course in Braille, are invited to apply to H. N. Vickerstaff (as above) for particulars. (Stamp for reply.)

FOR SALE.

"Empire" Typewriter (standard machine), Braille case, good condition. Reasonable offer accepted. Apply "M," c/o Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, W. 1.

WEST OF ENGLAND INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Assistant Foreman (sighted) wanted for the basket and mat making workshops of the above Institution. Experience in basket making essential, and knowledge of mat making desirable. Applications from men in both trades will receive consideration. Apply in writing, stating age, qualifications, experience and salary required, and enclosing copies of recent testimonials to The Secretary, St. David's Hill, Exeter.

THE BIRMINGHAM ROYAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT MASTER required for Senior Boys' School at present at Kinlet Hall, near Bewdley. Possession of the College of Teachers of the Blind Diploma an advantage. Burnham Scale III. with Special Schools increment, and board and lodging in exchange for extraneous and supervisory duties. Applications to the Secretary, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17, with copies of three recent testimonials, by 24th February, 1941.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF OLDHAM.

Blind Persons Act (1920) Committee.

WANTED, HOME TEACHER, must have passed the Home Teachers' examination. Salary £156 per annum, plus cost of living bonus.

The appointment is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination and to reside within the County Borough.

Canvassing or submitting testimonials from any member of the Council or of any Committee appointed by the Council will be a disqualification.

Application, stating age, qualifications and experience, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the undersigned immediately.

MAURICE HARRISON,

Education Offices.

Director of Education.

3rd February, 1941.

OXFORD SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND.

FOR SALE. TANDEM CYCLE.—Gents front, ladies back, derailleur 3-speed, electric lighting, good condition throughout. Price £7. Apply Mr. H. Leach, Lyneham, Oxon.

AFTER THE RAID.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, has published in Braille, as a Supplement to the National Braille Mail, a pamphlet issued by the Ministry of Home Security entitled "After the Raid," giving particulars on how you stand if you suffer from an air raid. Copies of the Braille edition can be obtained by readers of this journal, free of charge, on application.



By kind permission of the Evening Standard Co., Ltd., and Mr. David Low.

BRaille PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 36.—Two Union of Democratic Control Pamphlets. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

These two pamphlets, "Why France Fell" and "The Near and Middle East," are exceptionally clear and informative. The first analyses the causes of the French collapse and deduces the lessons that may be learned from it by those who wish to lay the foundations of a new social and international order. The second is a concise guide to Near and Middle East conditions and problems, which are both complicated and unfamiliar.

No. 37.—Who's the Guy? by A. J. Evans. In 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

A most original murder mystery—without a murder!—ingeniously conceived and written with wit and a nice eye to character.

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XXV. No. 291.

MARCH 15TH, 1941.

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BLITZ IN EAST LONDON

By A. K.

FOR the second time since war began, our blind have evacuated, or are in billets after being bombed out.

It has been a sad experience for London Home Visitors to see streets blasted out of recognition, to wonder vainly how all those old folk we rather loved, have fared since. We miss the Cockneys with their large families, and the Jewish homes with the everlasting smell of chicken. We come home cleaner; there are few hot kitchens or stuffy bedrooms to sit in. Our problems of overcrowding and verminous beds have passed to A.R.P. marshals in the public shelters.

At the beginning of the Blitz we spent our days climbing over débris to knock on empty houses, or to find piles of rubble which once housed a case. Then on to the Rest Centre or hospital to trace them. Our casualties have been miraculously small, although this part of London has suffered continuously since August, when a 'plane jettisoned six bombs within a hundred yards. As a conductor said to a man on the 'bus the other week, "You want the ruins, mate . . . they drop 'em there every night and half the afternoons. . ."

The first Blitz days were panicky. Landladies fled, leaving aged blind alone. There was no official evacuation scheme. Many had no good friends in the country; neighbours were too busy running to and from the shelters; local shops closed down or were bombed out. Time-bombs proved a blessing for a few, for this meant a Rest Centre and the chance of a voluntary evacuation scheme accepting them. We dealt with vehement neighbours who thought we should gather all the blind up bodily and send them away!

Intensive bombing overwhelmed local aid schemes at first. Old folk went from Centre to Centre begging to be taken away. When we interceded for deserving cases we were reminded that these old folk had finished their lives—that young people came first. True, but it was difficult to face up to.

Weeks later I was offered three vacancies "in the country." I chose three Cockneys. A blind woman and her husband, both well over seventy. The woman sat in her room—third floor of a rickety tenement, day and night under a couch tipped on end to stop the falling plaster. She had not washed or undressed for weeks. One window was out and the roof

leaking. Her husband was out searching for coal and food, for their market had been smashed out of existence in a night. No gas. No water. The third was an old man of eighty-six, left alone by his relatives and too ill to go to shelter. Only later did we find they had been sent to a Jewish Home on the South Coast !

Many old folk were drafted from public shelters to hospitals where they remained until shifted by a bomb on the hospital. Some ended up in Institutions. The other week we had a pathetic plea from an ancient who was collected up by the police three months ago because of a time-bomb. "Had the time-bomb gone off yet?" It had, but since then the little house has gone up in flames !

But for the many who went away, there are many other brave spirits who are still living in their little houses, often under appalling conditions. One old Jewess of seventy-five, left alone in a badly blasted house. Windows out, front door blown off, piles of plaster up the stairs (you needed an umbrella when it rained) ; fourteen hours nightly sleeping in a cold shelter. Yet she refused to go away because she could not get Jewish food. She is still here. They have adopted her at the shelter, and at the Christmas party she had two ports, sang carols and ended up with a foxtrot.

Another aged Jew refuses to go away because of his belongings . . . three suits and the contents of one small room !

Then there was Thomas, eighty-four, and his wife of eighty-one. They lived on the third floor of buildings so badly damaged that only six of forty tenants remained. No light ; escaping gas ; a great crack across the ceiling. They were taken to a Rest Centre and offered a country house at a time when people were flocking anywhere out of London. They crept out and went home. The bombing grew worse. Thomas, blind and ill, went senile and his wife sat and cried. During bad raids they had stumbled about to public shelters, but the black-out and the guns proved too much. Finally they sat by the fire, refusing to be moved out. Several people worried about them, but the place was made habitable and now the warden and local police visit them during every bad raid.

One more cameo of Pluck. Rhoda and her sister, two little widows of eighty odd, sit alone in their house, while their young tenants go off to the Tube every night. A small fire, candle-light, they sit out the long night vigil. They smile, a little wistfully, for they are afraid . . . who wouldn't be, with ruins all round and the infernal noise of bombs and gun barrage for hours on end, but they say, "We're just trusting to God, my dear."

The deaf-blind have created problems. One

woman, deserted by her landlady, caused much local heartburning because she would carry a lighted candle about the yard (she was looking for her cat). Mentally defective, she just could not understand what war meant until a bomb dropped across the road. A.R.P. men broke down three doors before they found poor Emma, covered with soot and plaster. She wanted to make them tea, but was taken off to hospital, still talking about the "pops that came down the chimley." She is now under safe control for the duration.

These fine folk who refuse to leave their homes, although a source of worry to others who know all the risks they take, will not be crushed by circumstances. They scrub and patch up their damaged houses, adopt stray cats, cook decent dinners despite rising prices, and overcome all the difficulties of the blind in dealing with ration books and limited choice of food-stuffs.

They have journeyed each night, wet or fine, throughout this winter, carrying their bundles to the public shelter. Many are still sleeping on stone floors, although bunks are steadily coming in now.

They have often returned home through fiery hells, after incendiaries have showered down during the night, to find their homes smoking ruins.

Others have come back to find their homes pilfered, and others have even been robbed while they lay asleep in the public shelters.

Yet, through it all, these humble old folk have kept their faith strong. Life has often been a struggle throughout their years, but they do not grumble unduly at this fresh crop of hardships. They form their own philosophy of life. One old lady said recently : "Oh well, when God wants me He'll take me. If I hid in a nutshell He'd find me out."

They hope rather wistfully that peace may come before very long, and that once again we shall have our pastime clubs and parties where they can meet for a chat, but meanwhile they say : "Thank God our lives and our house have been spared another night."

After nearly six months of Blitz, those of us who know and love East London can still thrill at its pluck, and its faith in God.

Bombing Experiences Wanted

The Editor of THE NEW BEACON would welcome short articles describing actual experiences of blind people in Air Raids. These could be written by the blind people themselves or by Home Teachers and others in contact with them. Address: The Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

HOME NEWS

Sunderland and Durham Institution for the Blind.—Subject to ratification by a further meeting of the Governors, control of Sunderland and Durham County Institution for the Blind will pass into the hands of Durham County Council and Sunderland Corporation.

At the second attempt a resolution providing for a reconstruction of the Committee of Management with this end in view was carried by 15 votes to 9 at the bi-annual meeting of the Governors held on 11th February, 1941.

The Chairman (Councillor James Patrick), after recalling that a previous motion had been defeated, said that as the two local authorities were making contributions of something like £60,000 they felt that they should have more representation.

The motion for reconstruction was moved by Ald. E. Thompson (Durham County Council). He said it provided for a new committee constituted as follows: Durham County Council and Sunderland Council, six representatives each; the Institute, eight; and subscribers, three, with three members from the ladies' committee co-opted without power to vote. That meant, he explained, that the Councils would have a voting majority of 12 against 11.

"We live in a period of change," added Ald. Thompson, "and I would not like it to be thought that we have come here with the slogan 'Those who pay the piper call the tune.' We see danger ahead and are trying to save you from yourselves. We are all interested in the blind and, in my opinion, the blind are the aristocrats in the world of the afflicted at the present time."

Swansea Institution Bombed.—We regret to report that Swansea and South Wales Institution for the Blind was one of the buildings severely damaged in recent air raids.

Blind Woman to keep Dog under Control.—Mary Matilda Mancini, lodging-house keeper, of Wellingborough, was summoned last month for being the owner of a dangerous dog not kept under proper control on January 24th. She said she needed the dog to help her about because she could not see. Morgan Jones, school teacher, said the dog bit him on the leg while he was cycling in Northampton Road. Mary Mancini said many strangers came to her house but the dog did not bite them. Her daughter had taken it out to play. An order was made for the dog to be kept under control and for the payment of 10s. 6d. costs.

Incendiary Bombs in Aid of the Blind.—Enemy air attacks on Manchester caused severe damage to blind welfare work in the area, and the local branch of the National Institute for the Blind records many instances of sympathetic help from members of the public.

One little girl, daughter of a doctor, raised money by collecting parts of incendiary bombs and charging her father's patients a penny to view the fragments. She had "more than a pound's worth of visitors" and has sent the proceeds to the Institute for its work among people blinded in air raids.

"After the Raid."—Copies in Braille of the pamphlet circulated by the Ministry of Home Security entitled "After the Raid" can be obtained free of charge by blind applicants from the National Institute for the Blind. It was issued as a supplement to the *National Braille Mail*, but all blind persons who can read Braille should possess a copy as the pamphlet contains a great deal of information which may prove very useful and timely. Blind persons resident in areas which have been frequently raided should especially make sure of possessing a personal copy of the pamphlet.

Blind Schoolchildren Help Weapons Week.—Under the direction of their headmaster, Mr. S. G. Prince, pupils of the West of England School for the Blind, Exeter, arranged two concerts in aid of Weapons Week and handed over £12. Staff and pupils also invested £100 in National Savings during the week.

Oldham Workshops Transfer Scheme Rejected.—At the Manchester Chancery Court, held in the Sessions Court on 10th March, the Vice-Chancellor, Sir John Bennett, had before him a scheme for the administration of the charity known as "The Oldham Workshops for the Blind," submitted by the trustees, the Rev. Howard Chadwick and others.

Mr. Wynn Parry, after describing the objects and scope of the charity, said that during recent years overlapping had arisen by reason of the statutory duties and powers imposed upon the County Borough of Oldham by the Blind Persons Act. The Council had appointed a Blind Persons Act Sub-committee, whose duties and functions were similar to those of the charity, and some few years ago there was some friction. The relations between the charity and the sub-committee were now on an amicable footing, but to eliminate all risk of future breach and the possibility of duplication it was proposed to

transfer the control and management of the charity to the persons who composed the sub-committee and to vest the properties in the official trustee of charity lands and the investments and funds in the official trustees of charitable funds.

With this object a scheme was submitted to the Charity Commissioners, but opposition was raised on behalf of the Oldham Royal Infirmary, which was contingently interested in the trust properties and funds. The petitioners submitted

that this opposition was due to a misunderstanding of the effect of the scheme.

The Attorney General of the Duchy, Sir Herbert Cunliffe, argued that though the trustees had acted in perfect good faith they had come too early with a scheme which had not been sufficiently thought out.

By consent the petition was dismissed, the costs of all parties to be paid out of the funds of the charity.

THE QUEEN'S GERANIUM DAY MESSAGE

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN, Patron of the Greater London Fund for the Blind, has sent the following message of encouragement to aid the Geranium Day Campaign. It is addressed to Mr. Stephen Wadey, Appeals Organiser of the Fund.

Buckingham Palace,

February 12th, 1941.

Dear Sir,

The Queen learns with sympathy of the Geranium Day Campaign in support of the Appeal for the Blind for 1941, and I am to express Her Majesty's hope that this will meet with the generous support of those who have for so long proved friends in need to the Blind

people for whom the Greater London Fund provides such tireless assistance.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR PENN,

Acting Private Secretary to The Queen.

Geranium Day, the annual joint appeal day for the blind, takes place this year throughout the Greater London area on Tuesday, 8th April. Two million flower emblems, made by the blind, will be on sale. Sellers are urgently required and should send in their names, with particulars of when and where they can sell, to the Appeals Organiser, Greater London Fund for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

AMALGAMATION OF TWO LONDON WORKSHOPS

THE London Association for the Blind established in 1857, and the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women, established in 1905, have decided in the interest of both Institutions to amalgamate next month.

This step has been under consideration for several years and the present decision is not the result of War difficulties, but a careful thought-out policy which should be of great advantage to both Charities.

The combined Machine Knitting Departments will be run under the name of the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women (the Knitting and Weaving Department of the London Association for the Blind) with workshops at Rosedale House, Warwick Way, S.W.1, 19-21, Crawford Street, W.1, and The East Dome, Bognor Regis, Sussex, all of which will probably be housed under one roof in due course. The largest showroom is at 19-21, Crawford Street, and the shops at 260, Kensington High Street, W.8, and

24, Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, have proved their great value to the Association.

Basket-making and the manufacture of knitting needles are carried on in the new workshops at 90 and 92, Peckham Road, S.E.15, which were only completed in September, 1939. The new building is a fine example of what a modern factory should be.

The Association also has a Home for Blind Women at Bickley, as well as the Homes at 67, Belgrave Road, S.W.1, and 93, Grove Lane, S.E.5, both of which have, however, been closed for the duration of the War.

The Eyes to the Blind Pensions Fund, an offshoot of the Barclay Workshops, continues as such, and the affiliation with the Barclay Home for Blind and Partially Blind Girls at Brighton, founded in 1893, will also continue.

The present Barclay Workshops Committee will become an Advisory Committee with Lady May of Weybridge as Chairman and with

Mr. Henry J. Wagg, O.B.E., as Honorary Secretary.

Her Grace The Duchess of Northumberland has kindly consented to be President, Mr. C. E.

Adams will continue as Chairman, Mr. G. C. Haines as Manager and Secretary, and Mrs. Hattersley Ward will be the Branch Superintendent at Crawford Street.

IMPERIAL NEWS

A Message from Queensland's Blind to England's Blind.—The following is an extract from a letter received by the National Institute for the Blind from the Queensland Braille Writing Association, 213 Vulture Street, South Brisbane, Australia :—

“Our blind here are always wondering how the blind in England are managing and wish they could help in some definite way. They, both men and women, are always busy with knitting needles and get surprisingly large parcels ready for the local Comforts Fund ; they also help in every way possible they can with war work. I join them in sending sincere

sympathy both to the blind themselves and to you all that are responsible for their care.”

Suggested Allotments for the Irish Blind.—The suggestion that allotments might be secured on which blind and partially sighted men could grow vegetables was made by Miss Armitage at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Council for the Blind of Ireland, held at 11 Molesworth Street, Dublin, last month.

It was pointed out that experience had proved that gardening was a suitable occupation for blind persons, and that many of them had become very successful in the work. It was decided to make application for plots to the Irish Allotments Association.

FOREIGN NEWS

Blind Beggar Racket in America.—An organised racket in which blind men were used by members of a ring to beg—on a business basis—has been discovered by the Philadelphia police.

They have arrested five men who, they say, led blind men from city to city.

One blind man confessed to the police that he had been through Detroit, Pittsburgh and other cities as part of a tour which started at Buffalo.

He was caught when he found himself unable to find his way back to the car in which four of his accomplices, all men who had their sight, were waiting to take him home. He had £30 on him.

Famous Blind Pianist Sues Parents.—Alec Templeton, the blind British pianist and composer, has filed a suit against his parents, who are living in Chicago, and their lawyer, asking them to account for about 200,000 dollars (£50,000) of his earnings. He alleges that he has been allowed only £25 a month. He has also sought an injunction to restrain his parents from using any power of attorney which he might have signed without knowing what it was.

Alec Templeton was born in Cardiff, of Scottish parents, in 1910, and has been blind from birth. He has been in America since 1935, when he was taken there by Jack Hylton. He was married in Los Angeles last August to Mrs. Juliette Vaini, a singer.

An Anecdote and an Atlas.—In the current issue of *The Lantern*, the magazine issued by the Perkins Institution, Massachusetts, an old-time anecdote is re-told. It concerns a Perkins dog which was totally blind. He liked to spend his days in the workshop among the men he knew, but at meal times the Perkins family cat would cross Fourth Street to fetch the dog home. This she did by preceding him, lightly brushing his nose with her waving tail. If a team should be passing on Fourth Street, the cat would sit down, and the dog would wait until the gentle guidance was renewed. Surely life at Perkins was full of homely and homelike attributes.

In the same issue is an interesting note on an early atlas for the blind. An atlas of the United States, embossed for the blind at Perkins in 1837, found its way back recently. Bound in red leather, tooled in gold, the atlas bore the book plate of Edward Everett and contained an inscription : “To Louis Philippe I, with the respect and esteem of Edward Everett.” It was brought from Europe to Miss Jane Muhlfeld, of New York, who now owns it. The atlas was made up of an embossed map of each state with a following page in line type, giving geographical characteristics. It was the first atlas printed for the blind in the United States.

GUIDING AND THE BLIND

By a Guider

TENS of thousands of people all over the world, men and women, boys and girls, of every race, colour and creed, are mourning the death of Lord Baden-Powell. Among the mourners many of the blind have taken their place, for, though unconscious of it, the Chief Scout has been the means of bringing happiness into thousands of darkened lives.

When he set the Scout Movement in motion he little thought that the girls would catch the spirit of it and start an organisation of their own, which would spread and grow even faster than that of its brother movement. He little thought that it would spread still farther until the blind and other handicapped boys and girls would beg to be allowed to join.

Was it possible? Could they enter into the varied activities that their fellows delighted in? Could they, for example, work for and win all the badges attainable to the normal, unhampered child? Yes, the Guides made room for their handicapped sisters, and soon leaders sprang up all over the country who were willing to form companies and patrols.

There were many difficulties, but none beyond the capacity of that band of leaders. Though few of them knew much about the ways of the blind, they realised that there were many things in which the blind could join with perfect ease and without need for sight. Any blind girl could learn the simple laws and three-fold promise required for enrolment. Any blind girl, if her heart were in it, could work for her second-class badge; simple first aid, bed-making, skipping, even laying a fire—all were possible.

One of the difficulties was how to get at the girls. Those of school age might form a school company, but many had left school, and were anxious to become Guides, or Rangers, as the older ones are called. These were scattered all up and down the country. Should they be refused? The Guides never say "No"; and so a way was found.

Instead of meeting each week as other companies did and having an evening together of work and play, a fortnightly journal was sent round from one member to the other. This contained a cheery letter from their leaders, competitions, badge work instruction, and other interesting items. Only where sight was

absolutely necessary was any test altered or adapted. So in their homes they worked and tried to live as Guides.

But they were not left to struggle alone with knots and other problems, for the sighted companies were ready to give them a helping hand. They were invited to their meetings, rallies, and even to their camps.

But there was just one thing lacking; being so scattered they could never meet the members of their own company. Correspondence is good, but not altogether quite satisfactory. Then some one had an inspiration. Why not have a camp for the blind companies only?

It would mean a lot of planning and arranging; many seeing helpers would be needed, indoor accommodation must be provided for those who could not sleep out, travelling must be made easy for those from long distances, and perhaps in some circumstances expenses met.

Conferences were held, and as each point cropped up it was met and settled. "You can have my field," said one, "there's a lovely barn in it which would hold quite a number." "There surely would be many guide companies who would spare their captains for a week or fortnight," said another. "The captain of each company could arrange for the journeys of their own members," said a third.

And so the first camp was held in a lovely spot in Essex. It was quite small, but none the less a success, and the campers went home feeling that now they really were in the Guide sisterhood at last. They had enjoyed all the work and fun that camp life brings, they had caught the spirit of comradeship which comes of living with those whose interests are one, they had come very close to the heart of nature in those open fields and shady woods, and still closer to the Great Creator. In brief, they had spent a week of pure healthy normal happiness, sharing to the full the joys which until then they had thought were only within the reach of their more favoured comrades—the joy which the Chief Scout had learnt in his boyhood, and passed on to the boys and girls of the world.

This was only a beginning. The blind companies grew, divided and subdivided, and camp became an annual event. Each year the numbers swelled until the camp too had to divide and subdivide. From north and south, from east and west they came, shy, timid, reserved; and then returned home keen, enthusiastic, and ready to

fling themselves whole-heartedly into the work of their company.

As this section grew it became apparent to headquarters that it was a definite branch of Guiding, and must be organised as such. So a Commissioner was appointed, whose duty it was to direct all the affairs connected with this section. With all the other sections of handicapped guides it was called the Extension branch, and the companies that worked by correspondence were called Posts. Special badges were issued for tests that had to be adapted, and for a time the enrolment badge was

a trefoil of mauve enamel; latterly this was abolished and the ordinary gold trefoil of the other Companies adopted.

This is the story of Guiding for the Blind in a nutshell. No further details are necessary, for the work still goes on, and any member of a company would be only too pleased to tell enquirers what guiding has done for them. From being conscious only of their handicap they have become aware that they can take their place in the service of their fellow citizens with all their comrades of the great sisterhood of Girl Guides.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL FEDERATION AND THE WAR-BLINDED

WE have received from the Scottish National Federation for the Welfare of the Blind a copy of its scheme for the provision of welfare services for the war-blinded, other than members of the Forces, regular police officers and professional firemen. The scheme, prepared by a Committee representative of the Federation, the Scottish Association of Home Teachers and the Scottish Branch of the College of Teachers of the Blind, has been drawn up between the Federation and the Department of Health for Scotland. Its main provisions may be summarised as follows:—

1. It provides for the extension to the war-blinded civilian of the welfare services of local authorities and voluntary agencies for the blind. While it is hoped that existing schools, training centres, workshops, etc., will meet the needs of this new class, the Committee is prepared, if necessary, to consider the provision of further accommodation.

2. Six ophthalmic units have been set up under the Emergency Hospital Scheme of the Department of Health for Scotland, and the Scottish National Federation has appointed

liaison officers for each of these, to ensure that all cases reported shall have brought within their reach the welfare services for the blind. Where civilians are treated at hospitals other than those having ophthalmic units, arrangements for their notification to the Secretary of the appropriate Blind Society will be made.

3. To facilitate the training and employment of blinded civilians, the Committee will if possible arrange with Government Departments and Local Authorities to admit a prior claim on the part of the institutions giving training and employment to a share of contracts other than those which are purely competitive.

4. Every effort will be made to secure whenever possible reabsorption into ordinary industry of blinded civilians, and if necessary negotiations will be entered into with Employers' Associations and Trade Unions to secure modifications of conditions attaching to Workmen's Compensation.

The normal welfare services available to the blind (e.g. home visiting and teaching, supply of wireless, travel facilities) will be provided for the war-blinded through the officers of local societies, aided where necessary by voluntary workers.

A BLIND MAN BOMBED OUT

WE have received from a blind correspondent living in a Western city the following vivid account of his terrible experience in a recent bombing raid on the district.

"One evening, while I was alone in our flat, the usual distant bombing and firing started about 6.30 p.m. I took no notice till three young people, who had just come into the top flat to live with us, came running down almost in hysterics, saying that the town was on fire in twenty or thirty places, and that there ought to be a shelter. I told them there was, and took

them down to it. I went up the sixty-three stairs four or five times to see if there were any incendiaries, but all seemed to be all right. True, the stairs were strewn with broken glass and most of the windows out. While talking to the youngsters a stick of six bombs went off in rapid succession and a minute or so later the whole of the street was a roaring furnace from top to bottom, both sides. One bomb went right through the house next door and blew it to the ground, shaking our old 2-foot walls like a pack of cards. Just after, another bomb hit the pavement outside the

shop, blowing it and the front door past me and out to the back yard. It was the biggest noise I ever heard. I told the youngsters they had better try and clear out before the house came down on them. That they did, but as the walls still seemed cold to the touch, I had a sort of an idea that our place might still stand, so once more I went up to our sitting room and listened to the radio (which was going well).

"I was reading a good detective yarn by the fire when two firemen burst in and told me to clear out quick while there was a chance, for the house was already well alight, as well as next door. They gave me two minutes to get anything I could. In my haste all I got was a small suitcase with a few clothes, a $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of tea, a new pack of Braille cards, my boy's photo and one of his old motor coats. (Now go on, laugh, and say what *you* would have taken in the circumstances!) I put my hand up to see if there was any glass left, and found it burnt by the flames from the flat below. An oak cupboard door opposite the window was full of splinters of glass. We hurried down and

out, up the street, keeping to the centre to avoid the flames from each side, and up to a shelter under a nearby church, where I stayed till 4 a.m., and then went to the Y.M.C.A., passing a motor tractor which was bringing food.

"Later I was taken to a school, but after four or five days the bombing nearby was so intense that we had to clear out, and I went to stay with an old blind friend. Last week I moved into a convenient flat of two rooms. Very different to our seven rooms and bathroom, but so many people are in a similar plight that it is almost impossible to get rooms at all. It is the same with furniture. We have managed to get a few secondhand things, but people seem reluctant to 'part.' Of course, I have lost every mortal thing and don't know when I shall get any compensation.

"Someone has sent me a very ancient Braille writer, but I am afraid to write to anyone on it. The bell only rings when it likes and the ratchet keeps missing some letters and keeps on going on top of the last one. This handwritten letter is quite bad enough, but I'll bet none of your people could read the Braille!"

PLASTICINE MAP-MAKING IN PERKINS INSTITUTION

By CLARA L. PRATT, Perkins Institution, Watertown, Massachusetts.

I HAVE read the excellent article by Mr. Leonard Hardcastle in THE NEW BEACON of November 15th, in which he wishes for further information about map drawing in Perkins Institution. We do not carry out the practice to the extent that I believe he thinks we do. We make much use of Braille maps and raised globes for the greater part of the year, as the task of preparing a plasticine map for each section of the world being studied would require too much of school time, as Mr. Hardcastle believed it would. Also it would be too arduous a task for those pupils who have little aptitude for such work.

Only once or twice during the school year do we devote time to this art, even now seeing that outside material is assigned for research work. Usually a pupil is given his choice as to the map that he wishes to draw. Whether or not it is something with which he is familiar makes little difference as our desire is to have all pupils world conscious. It is a delight to see pupils browsing around among maps and globes while deciding what to make. Then is the time that the teacher can check better than any other his deftness, and how wide a knowledge he may have gained. Having made a choice, the pupil now matches his ability not only against that of his classmates, but against that of any pupil whose map is available for inspection. Only

a very small percentage have no aptitude or liking for this work. When it is found that a pupil gets no benefit at all from it, a book of supplementary reading can be substituted.

Many benefits are derived from plasticine map drawing. It leads to a much better interpretation of Braille maps and of globes; it develops the better use of hands; it fastens shapes and patterns much more firmly in mind; it satisfies a desire for a change from routine; develops pride in achievement, and gives a wider knowledge of the world.

One of our former pupils who afterwards enjoyed a college course writes:

"I am always thankful that I had the opportunity, while at Perkins, to spend many a happy hour making plasticine maps, for I am never at a loss to picture with my mind's eye any part of the globe I may desire. It is surprising how vividly bodies of water, mountain ranges, deserts, boundaries, cities, etc., appear before me. Then, too, approximate distances are easily determined. All this information proves to be invaluable help when it comes to discussing current events with my sighted friends. I firmly believe that a thorough understanding of world conditions depends in a large measure on a thorough knowledge of various types of maps. A blind person gains much by actually making and thereby knowing his maps."

BRAILLE AND THE ADULT LEARNER

MUCH has been written from time to time on the incalculable debt the blind owe to Louis Braille. In the eighteen-thirties when he devised his system organised welfare work for the blind had hardly begun, and the elaborate machinery of to-day had not been dreamed of; and yet more than a century of progress and a network of elaborate organisations of all sorts have never devised anything more suited to the questing finger than the six-point system. Its adaptability is not the least of its marvels; the young blind comrade in Russia, blind members of a Nazi Youth group, the blind Fascist in Italy and our own democratic blind all read their so-varying accounts of the war with the help of an obscure French countryman of whom the men of Vichy have never heard. And the blind men of all these countries who seek alleviation in the tragedy of war may find it in Braille music or the Braille chess problem.

The Braille system, then, stands hardly altered since its first inception. But have methods of teaching Braille to the adult who loses his sight made any advance in recent years? The subject is one of special interest to home teachers, though little seems to have been written on the subject. Some years ago *Training the Fingers to Feel Braille* broke new ground, but it was rather severely criticised in a review in *The Teacher of the Blind* on the ground that it took "little account of the mind," and that the system followed, though admittedly useful, was arbitrary. Whether these criticisms were justified or not we do not profess to judge, but the fact remains that the system advocated by Miss Ainsworth, the author of the book, did prove very successful in several cases. Those who have read the Report of the Joint Committee of the College of Teachers of the Blind and the National Institute for the Blind published in 1936 will remember an account given in its pages of a teacher who from the outset taught her pupils contracted Braille; under her direction the child learned from the beginning that dot 5 M stands for "Mother" and did not reach this conclusion through two earlier stages, the first of six separate letters and the second of "M-o-the-r." Some people suggest that this method might have an adverse effect upon a child's spelling, but this criticism, even if valid in the case of a child (and this is uncertain), would not hold in the case of the blinded adult, who has already learned to spell in his seeing days. For him, the goal to be reached is effortless reading, and the sooner he can attain to it the better.

How far, one wonders, does the newly blinded person find difficulty in memorising the lists of final contractions. Some probably find them tiresome, and for these people a mnemonic may be useful. The pupil who finds a list like -ence, -ong, -ful, -tion, -ness, -ment, -ity, give him trouble, may more easily remember the contractions concerned when they are harnessed to words in a silly sentence like: "His Eminence, in strong yet graceful diction, bore witness to the torment of infidelity," with its mental picture of the prelate thundering against the unbeliever.

Some years ago, the College of Teachers of the Blind was in the habit of awarding its Macgregor Prize to home teachers showing skill and originality in the teaching of Braille or Moon; but so far as Braille teaching was concerned, nothing appears to have been published as a result. To-day, when owing to the toll of war it is all too likely that many adults may lose their sight, it is specially desirable that the Braille teaching they receive shall be of the highest quality, and a pooling of ideas by home teachers and others concerned would therefore be valuable.

The correspondence which has recently appeared in our pages as to the value of finger-reading in the case of the adult seeing person is perhaps relevant here; for the home teacher who has patiently schooled herself to read with her fingers is far more likely to understand the difficulties of the newly blinded adult than one who reads Braille, as so many of us do, by sight alone.

THE EDITOR.

SUPPLEMENTARY OLD AGE PENSIONS

WE much regret that at the present juncture it is not possible to give in complete detail the conditions now applicable in connection with supplementary pensions. The new Means Test enactment has so fundamentally altered the scales of assistance that the original regulations as administered by the Unemployment Assistance Board are no longer applicable. As soon as the

new regulations are issued by the Stationery Office, we hope to make their general effect known through the columns of *THE NEW BEACON*. In the meantime it is merely necessary to observe that the supplementary pension will be paid to a much larger number of needy persons than was originally contemplated.

BEN PURSE.

RURAL REACTIONS

By COUNTRYMAN

IHAVE read with interest Mr. Ben Purse's article on the Supplementary Old Age Pensions in the February issue. It may interest readers of *THE NEW BEACON* to learn something of the reactions of the Supplementary Pension Old Age Pensions Act on Domiciliary Assistance in a rural area. In this rural area it was early decided that blind people, who would have been eligible for a Supplementary Pension but for the bar of blindness, should not suffer financial loss on this account.

At the same time it was decided that the best way to ensure the desired result was literally to apply the "Supplementary Pension" Scale instead of the "Blind" in their regard. It was too much to expect the local Assistance Board to work out the Supplementary Pensions due, and it therefore meant that the Secretary and Home Teachers had to make themselves conversant with the actual calculation and administration of Supplementary Pensions. This was a fruitful and interesting labour.

These are the conclusions reached after a careful comparison of the two Scales. It was curious to discover how closely the two Scales approximated as to the amount of financial help to be given, notwithstanding that the methods of arriving at this amount were so dissimilar.

These are the respects in which the "Supplementary Pension" Scale conferred the greater benefits:—

(1) The Scale for a blind man and sighted wife usually gave the couple anything from 1s. to 3s. more a week.

Where both the husband and wife are entitled to a Supplementary Pension or where clearly the husband or the wife was previously dependent on the other member of the partnership, the "Supplementary Pension" Scale considers and relieves their joint needs. Under the "Blind" Scale the blind wife is not relieved as she is

dependent on her sighted husband and it is considered that he should apply for Public Assistance or a Supplementary Pension, as the case may be, if help is required. Apparently the Assistance Board Officer can refuse to take into account the needs of a blind wife of a sighted husband. In actual fact, the Assistance Board in this area do meet her needs.

(2) The dependency of a sighted adult, other than a woman who could be described as "living-in-help," is more readily admitted. This is a great boon as not infrequently there is at home with a blind father or mother a sighted adult child unable to earn because of mental deficiency or chronic heart disease, etc.

(3) If the pensioner in effect accepts responsibility for the payment of the rent notwithstanding that there is an adult wage-earning son or other member of the household, he receives distinct benefit on this account. Under the "Blind" Scale the pensioner in such a household would be treated almost certainly as "living-with-relations." It would be assumed that the son was the true tenant.

(4) The assessable income for lodgers who live with the pensioner, is slightly better provided the lodger does not pay more than 23s. a week. Above that limit it is better for the pensioner if the lodger is assessed under the "Blind" Scale.

(5) In the event of the pensioner having to go into a hospital as an in-patient, the full Supplementary Pension is payable for two or three weeks—which is a great benefit, for example, to a dependent wife. After that period the Supplementary Pension may naturally be reduced on the grounds that there is one less mouth to feed at home. Under the "Blind" Scale the reduction in the amount of Domiciliary Assistance given to the dependent wife for example, would take effect from the moment when the husband entered hospital.

(6) A pension for a son killed in the war can be ignored up to 7s. 6d. a week. Under the "Blind" Scale this is not so. A disability pension is, of course, ignored.

(7) Where the amount of the Supplementary Pension exceeds a round figure of 6d. or 1s. by 3d., 4d. or 5d., the pensioner is given the benefit and payment is made of the higher 6d. or 1s. This is not so under the "Blind" Scale.

(8) I have left until the last all mention of what seems to me to be the best merit of the "Supplementary Pension" as compared with the "Blind" Scale. It is its far greater elasticity: much more discretionary power is invested in the Assistance Board than in the Blind Welfare Officers. This is a great advantage in dealing with human problems which refuse rigid classification and so defy committees who are slaves to the written regulations.

The "Blind" Scale, on the other hand, is superior in these particulars:—

(1) Under this Scale, blind people living with relations and blind people living alone are better off and blind people living with relations will

still be a little better off even after the present Supplementary Pension Bill is through Parliament.

(2) The income counted as assessable to the pensioner in respect of single sons and daughters earning and living at home is less.

(3) A free doctor and medical benefits, such as insulin and surgical bandages, can be provided (as well as milk or a diabetic diet, etc.). This is impossible under the other Scale.

(4) The winter allowance is 2s. for a single blind person as well as for a couple. It is 1s. under the Supplementary Pension Scale.

(5) Generally speaking, the rent allowance is better.

It is impossible to forecast the future action of the committee in this particular area, but there are drawbacks in administering two independent Scales. It is possible that the "Blind" Scheme of Domiciliary Assistance will be revised in the near future so as to make the application of a "Supplementary Pension" Scale in a limited number of instances superfluous.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

"Blind World."

SIR,—I have read, with mixed feelings, the article "Blind World" which appeared in the January issue of THE NEW BEACON—feelings which were at first agreeable, but later, very much otherwise.

The blind community has always benefited by the services of the more intelligent of its members: witness the work of Louis Braille and, more recently, of our own Braille Music Committee; but generally speaking, what encouragement, or even opportunity, is given at the present time, to blind persons desirous of serving their sightless fellows? Is, for instance, the low proportion of blind to seeing Home Teachers due to the lack of blind aspirants to that profession (in which, perhaps, more than in any other, they could be of essential service), or is it due to the refusal of superintendents and employing agencies to admit them to their staffs?

It is hard to kick against the pricks and many blind people, meeting one rebuff after another, quite naturally become discouraged and give up in despair.

This is only one instance of many which could be quoted to prove, not lack of desire, but lack of opportunity.

My experience of blind intellectuals is that they are more than willing to render assistance to the cause whenever and wherever opportunity arises, and to refer to such as egotists when (by reason of the reactionary tendencies of those who hold the power of appointment) such opportunity is denied them and they divert their energies into other channels—channels which, at least, afford them the opportunity of service to some members of the community—is an affront that should be rejected by every thinking blind person.

Yours, etc.,
JOHN MARTIN, Mus.B.

Bolton.

To the Editor.

SIR,—I read with interest your Editorial on the Blind World.

Personally, I have not the slightest qualms about accepting the term "Blind World." To my way of thinking, any blind person who shrinks from accepting his or her membership of such a world, is either a coward or a snob; and there shouldn't be room for either.

It takes all sorts to make a world, the same is equally true of the Blind World; but who exactly are these "Independents"?

If an "Independent" is one who tries as

nearly as possible to lead the life of an ordinary normal person, then I must be one, and I'll suffer the title gladly. I am proud to be able to say that I take a lively interest in most outdoor sports, especially Association football and cricket; I am keen and eager to learn any indoor game which comes along; and I take a wide and varied interest in all kinds of entertainment, radio, the films and theatre. I do not enjoy any sense of superiority over my fellows in affliction, but I do feel most strongly that, as a whole, the blind are very slow to avail themselves of the many and varied opportunities of making their lives more happy and interesting.

There are those blind people whose day begins at the workshop and invariably ends at the Local Blind Aid Centre; this is all very well in its way. But many of these people have no other interests in life, and they just look on such things as the Guide Dog for the blind as something "pathetic." I happen to live in a town and district where the work and activities of the Local Blind Committee are almost nil, so perhaps it's a good thing that I am an "Independent" in the sense that I try to make life interesting. There's plenty of talent and plenty of ideas among the blind; they just need rousing and encouraging.

Yours, etc.,
H. R. DRIVER.

To the Editor.

Sighted Braille Writers Should Learn to Read by Touch.

SIR,—I was most interested to learn from the correspondence page of the February NEW BEACON that another sighted person has found the advantage of reading Braille by touch. It has always seemed strange to me that so many writers of Braille never attempt to read it except by sight. I actually heard one lady say that she had had to give up writing Braille because reading over what she had written was too much of a strain on her eyes. When I told her that my eyes were the last part of my anatomy likely to be strained by reading Braille she stared at me as though I was half-witted!

Reading Braille with the eyes for any length of time is a strain to any one. It is to me, although my sight is good. But I seldom do it now for, like your correspondent, I have found that if one reads over one's transcriptions by touch one will come across mistakes the sight reader would miss. It stands to reason that it should be more satisfactory to correct by the means to be employed by future readers. Little markings in the paper and alterations that are going to be a worry to these readers will be noticeable to the finger as they could not be to the eye.

Many people have an idea that it is extremely difficult for those with normal sight to learn to read Braille by touch. I have even heard some say it is impossible—perhaps because they are too lazy to attempt it! "We haven't got a strong enough sense of touch," they will tell you. They are wrong. Contrary to the popular idea I believe that the sense of touch is as strong in the sighted as in the blind, at least as in those who have lost their sight in adult life. It is only a question of development. Naturally, when we can see we do not need to develop our sense of touch very much, but by making an effort we can increase its development.

I admit that learning to read Braille with the fingers involves much hard work and tremendous concentration in the initial stages. But it is well worth it. Like Louie Hodge I have for years appreciated the joy of reading in bed with one's hands nice and warm under the bedclothes, and in these black-out days I get a further benefit from Braille reading. Not liking to sleep in the stuffiness of a room with closed shutters I always open mine before settling down for the night. This means, of course, that I cannot put on the light again, and if I want to read in bed in the ordinary way I must get up after my read to open up, when I am all snug and warm and ready to go to sleep. A terrible bore! But if one has a Braille book, one can open the shutters first, and then settle down to a cosy read, knowing that one has nothing further to do before going to sleep but to chuck the book out on to a bedside table—not even that if one doesn't find it too uncomfortable as a bedmate!

Though I have already spoken of the matter in the pages of THE NEW BEACON some years ago, I want to take this opportunity of again urging all writers of Braille to learn to read it with their fingers. Apart from the personal pleasure they will get from it there is now a special need. The horrors of warfare may produce many newly blinded; we are under no delusions about that, there are already a few. As soon as possible, these people will be taught Braille. They will probably be despondent at first and think that they cannot learn, particularly if they are not very young. But if their teacher can say to them, "I read Braille by touch; I too felt in the early days that it would never come; that all my fingers were thumbs; but I conquered that feeling and so can you," how much more encouraged they will be to go on with the struggle than if they thought they were being taught by a sight reader who could not understand their difficulties. Isn't it worth while doing all we can to help such people, however great the effort and strain to ourselves?

Yours, etc.,
HELEN CHALMERS.

PERSONALIA

The Rev. W. J. NICHOLSON, Pastor of Salem Congregational Church, Portmadoc, has retired after fifty years' service. He has been in the front rank of Welsh preachers and popular with all denominations as a pulpit personality. A few years ago he lost his eyesight.

* * *

Miss E. N. WHITTOME, Secretary to the Isle of Ely Society for the Blind, has secured the post of Secretary to the Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind, and expects to begin her new duties in the middle of April.

* * *

Mr. C. N. KEMPFF, formerly an Inspector of the Departments of Education and Social Service, has arrived in Cape Town from Pretoria and has assumed duty as Organising Secretary for the National Council for the Blind.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Martin Henderson, aged 60, the blind Whitley Bay musician, whose work for charity made him well known throughout Northumberland. He was an accomplished pianist and concertina player.

H. C. Stephens, of Muswell Hill, well known in the locality as an expert blind piano tuner.

Mrs. Annie Carbis, wife of Mr. Samuel Carbis, of Dalton, aged 57. She was a great help to her husband in his work as organiser for the Barrow, Furness and Westmorland Society for the Blind.

Charlie Lothian, the Scottish Organiser of the National League of the Blind, at Glasgow, aged 72. He was a pioneer of municipal employment for the blind and led the agitation for the transfer of workshops for the blind from charitable to civic control in the West of Scotland. He was one of the best-known Labour personalities in Scotland and had attended many conferences of the Labour Party and the T.U.C. in England.

Dr. William Taylor Doyle Allen, a well-known Liverpool general practitioner and physician to the Liverpool School for the Blind.

Sir William Seager, D.L., J.P., of Cardiff, aged 79. At one time, Sir William was Chairman of the Cardiff Institute for the Blind.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Septuagenarian's Winning Verses.—Mr. Walter Montgomery, blind ex-maker of reversible mats, now aged 74, sent in the best entry to a writing competition organised by the East Suffolk County Association for the Blind. The subject was "A lament of a Frenchman or a Frenchwoman on the present collapse of his or her country, in prose or rhyme." Mr. Montgomery sent in five verses, of which we quote the last two:—

My country is suffering privation and woe,
For the Germans are looting wherever they go.
Train loads of cattle, of goods, and of kind,
Nothing of value they're leaving behind.
To redeem bonnie France from this terrible
plight,
We would lay down our lives and would die in
the fight.

And so with full confidence we will press on
Till our dear land is cleared from this unholy
throng,
Till every small nation has liberty grand
And tyranny's banished from every land.
Side by side with our allies for this end we'll
fight
Till we've gained the great victory for God and
the right.

Portsmouth Pianists.—Three blind girls of Portsmouth have passed with credit the recent examination in pianoforte by the Associated Board. They are Patricia Newman (Grade I, Primary), Jean Watts (Grade II, Elementary), and Peggy Hopkins (Grade V, Higher), pupils at the Francis Avenue Blind School.

Blind Boy Collects £600 for War Weapons.—A blind boy, Jonathan Fisher, who lives with his father at Grange Farm, Ivegill, near Carlisle, Cumberland, has collected £611 for the local War Weapons Week.

Led by his sheepdog, Jonathan set out on a bitterly cold day to collect money. He and his dog hiked over hills and dales, calling upon farmers, labourers in the fields and cottagers' wives.

Returning home he added up his money and made out a neat account in Braille. Next morning he presented the £611 to Mrs. Bryson, village schoolmistress, who is treasurer of the Savings Fund.

Sinclair Logan, F.R.C.O.—We heartily congratulate Mr. Sinclair Logan, F.R.C.O., on the success he has achieved in joining the ranks of

the Fellowship Members of the Royal College of Organists. It is certainly surprising that such a busy man as he, with his many activities as musical director and broadcaster, should have found time for study and practice to prepare for such a coveted diploma. No doubt he would have taken it at the end of his student days had it not been for the opportunity which then occurred of his joining Lady Pearson's Concert Party as a singer, the profession of his choice, in which he has since attained on the Radio outstanding prominence.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

Fellowship House, Hoylake.—This Holiday Home continues its valuable work for the Deaf-Blind, and it is good to learn that in the first year of the war its bookings reached a record. Through the enterprise of an Oldham friend, 35 deaf-blind persons from Oldham each had a week's holiday at the Home, coming in relays of 6 to 8, accompanied by a home teacher; it is hoped that other areas will follow the good example set by Oldham, which proved a great success.

The National Institute for the Blind had purchased, prior to the war, a large house at Hoylake in order to meet the need for extended premises, but owing to building restrictions necessary alterations to the home have been temporarily held up; as soon as the present embargo is lifted, the Institute intends to proceed with the work, but meanwhile Fellowship House is carrying on as best it can in the restricted premises available.

Empire

Blind Welfare Association, Northern Ireland.—This Association has now been at work for over two years, and to-day has an organiser and six home teachers at work and many Local Committees in the six northern counties. The organiser in her report on the year's work rightly stresses the importance of registration as forming the solid foundation of all successful welfare work for the blind, and notes that in the three counties of Antrim, Down and Armagh, where the work of the home teachers has hitherto been concentrated, there are over 1,150 registered blind persons, of whom more than 90 per cent. are over 40 years of age. The reports of the

individual home teachers on their personal contacts with the people they visit give a colourful touch to the picture, and all home teachers will recognise the accuracy of the following record of a home teacher's round: "I have filled in ration cards, done the shopping, found and returned the cat, fed an old lady with her dinner, had a leaking hot water bottle mended, gathered the eggs, counted the chickens."

New Zealand Institute for the Blind.—This Institute has recently celebrated its Jubilee, as it was founded in 1889. Owing to war-time conditions no special celebrations have been held, but the Annual Report gives an interesting account of some of the early years. To-day the Institute has 36 children in its School, over 100 workers in its workshop, 37 elderly people in its Home, and 1,190 registered blind persons throughout the Dominion in its care. Sales in 1939-40 reached a record sum of £16,420, and the output of the workshops is increasing so rapidly that additional accommodation will shortly be needed. Houses have been built or converted during the past five years for 30 blind married men, and a new Home opened for elderly blind women.

Canadian National Institute for the Blind.—The Report for 1939-40 shows that nearly 12,000 blind persons are on the Register, a figure which its Managing Director, Captain Baker, considers as probably near the highest likely to be reached.

Details are given of the activities of the six regions into which Canada is divided for the purpose of the work (Newfoundland, Maritime, Quebec, Ontario, Central Western, and Western) and each has its points of special interest. We read of a training and recreation centre opened in the Maritime Division, of bowling as an organised sport for the blind of Ontario, and of a special class for young blind children living in their own homes in the Central Western Division. The Report is attractively illustrated.

Ezenzeleni, Transvaal.—Although the account of work at Ezenzeleni, Roodepoort, Transvaal, is given in the form of an Occasional Letter (and not an Annual Report) from the Rev. Arthur Blaxall, it may be dealt with under this heading, and describes a particularly interesting experiment. Work for the coloured and Indian groups of the blind community in the Transvaal began about four years ago, and in October, 1937, a small training centre was opened in a suburb of Johannesburg. It was "an unsatisfactory place for such a venture" and before long money was collected and a farmstead and ground purchased in the neighbourhood of Wilgespruit. A good water-supply was discovered, and a sympathetic State department together with the generosity of friends made it seem likely that a centre could be built

up on the lines described in the Occasional Letter—"We cherished a vision of a place in which Christians of different ways of worship, various traditions, languages and colour could associate together on similar lines to what is known as an Ashram in India. . . We desired above all not to be mere imitators of that which might suit India or elsewhere, but rather to develop something essentially African and in particular South African." The outbreak of war led to the closing of the pioneer centre in the Johannesburg suburb and concentration of all work at Roodepoort, and details of the experiment are to be given in the formal Annual Report of the Society's work to be published shortly.

Foreign

Perkins Institution.—Several new develop-

ments of the work of the Institution receive notice in the Report for 1940. Among them have been the exploration of new methods of teaching retarded children, with the placing of special stress on contact with everyday things; the grouping of the younger deaf-blind in one cottage; regular religious instruction of the children in three groups, each group being provided with a teacher from the religious body concerned—a plan that "has made a positive contribution to the morale of the school"; a series of conferences for voluntary workers among the blind; and new activities in the workshop under the auspices of the Blind Artisans of New England, these activities including candle-making and the making of ironing-board covers. As in former years, the photographs that illustrate the Report are delightfully chosen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices are net and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production, and are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dance:					s.	d.
18251	Rumpel-Stilts-Kin	..	..	..	0	6
18252	Down Argentina Way	..	..	..	0	6
18253	When your train has gone	..	..	..	0	6
18254	Only forever	..	..	..	0	6

BRAILLE BOOKS.

The prices represent the actual cost of production. Blind residents in any part of the British Empire are charged one-third of the quoted price.

Note.—The following Books and Pamphlets are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed, paper covers.

Braille Pandas.

18296-8 No. 37. Who's the Guy, by A. J. Evans.
3 vols. 1s. 6d. net. *Limited edition sold out.*

Massage.

18271-2 Introduction to Short Wave Therapy: Technique and Indications, by Ernst Fritsch and Dr. Martin Schubart. 2 vols. F137. 7s. 3d. per vol.

Poetry.

18261 Fear No More: A Book of Poems for the Present Time by Living English Poets. F54. 6s. 3d. per vol.

MOON BOOKS.

4470-8 Disputed Passage, by L. C. Douglas. 9 vols. (Library of Congress Publication.)

4479-86 The Woodlanders, by Thomas Hardy. 8 vols. (Library of Congress Publication.)

NEW APPARATUS.

A new stock of silver Braille wristlet watches is available. Owing to the variation in the value of the Swiss franc, and the addition of the Purchase Tax, the price has now been fixed at £4 16s. each.

AFTER THE RAID.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, has published in Braille, as a Supplement to the National Braille Mail, a pamphlet issued by the Ministry of Home Security entitled "After the Raid," giving particulars on how you stand if you suffer from an air raid. Copies of the Braille edition can be obtained by readers of this journal, free of charge, on application.

EVACUATION ADDRESSES: A REQUEST.

Enquiries as to the temporary addresses of schools, workshops and agencies for the blind reach the National Institute for the Blind daily; and the Editor of the NEW BEACON would therefore like in a forthcoming issue to publish the addresses and telephone numbers of as many of these organisations as possible; he would gratefully receive the necessary details for publication, which should reach him not later than April 1st, for insertion in our April issue.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

28th February, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	2
<i>Two applications under consideration.</i>	
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Southport ..	6
<i>Six applications under consideration.</i>	
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate ..	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea ..	—
<i>(Applications from blind persons and their guides for periods of rest can now be received).</i>	
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring ..	4

HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield	—
Thomas Briggs Lomas Home, Glensanda, Rhyl	—

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND of the County Borough of Newport and the Administrative County of Monmouth.

Applications are invited for the position of sighted Foreman to take charge of Men's Workshop employing 11 persons. Necessary qualifications are experience in basket-making and mat-making and an ability to superintend the work of the blind employees.

The salary payable is £208 per annum. Applications stating age, experience, and accompanied by copies of recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the under-signed not later than 31st March, 1941.

F. LIONEL WATKINS.

199, Chepstow Road,
Newport, Mon.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND of the County Borough of Newport and the Administrative County of Monmouth.

Applications are invited for the position of sighted Forewoman to take charge of Workshop employing 5 females. Applicants should have a knowledge of circular machine-knitting, handloom weaving and chair-caning.

In addition, the person appointed will be required to act, in a supervisory capacity, as Matron of the Hostel accommodating the 5 employees. Staff will be provided. Salary £100 per annum, plus board-residence.

Applications stating age, experience and accompanied by copies of recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned not later than March 31st, 1941.

F. LIONEL WATKINS,
Secretary.

199, Chepstow Road,
Newport, Mon.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING.

BLIND PERSONS ACT, 1920.

Appointment of Home Teacher and Supervisor.

Applications are invited for the post of female (sighted) Home Teacher and Visitor of blind persons and supervisor of the blind home workers in Reading, at a salary of £156 per annum, together with a cost of living bonus awarded by the Council amounting to 5s. 6d. per week.

Applicants must have some knowledge of handicrafts suitable for blind persons, of the home workers' trades, and of Braille, as well as an ability to teach. The person appointed will be responsible for obtaining orders from firms and private individuals and for examining the work done by the workers.

The person selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to her inclusion in the superannuation scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, experience, qualifications, and date when services would be available, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, must be delivered to me endorsed "Home Teacher and Supervisor," not later than Monday, the 24th instant.

C. S. JOHNSON,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Reading.
1st March, 1941.

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

SPECIAL NOTICE TO HOME TEACHERS: Those awarded the Diploma prior to 1932, and who desire a Refresher Course in Braille, are invited to apply to H. N. Vickerstaff (as above) for particulars. (Stamp for reply.)



By kind permission of the Evening Standard Co., Ltd.,
and Mr. David Low.

BRAILLE PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 38.—The Epic of Dunkirk, by E. Keble Chatterton.
3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

The thrilling epic of how every sort of craft was collected and sent across the Channel to snatch from an inferno soldiers tottering with fatigue. It contains reports written by the Captains themselves, and first-hand information from shipowners.

No. 39.—Counterpoint Murder, by G. D. H. and M. Cole. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

In a Pall Mall Club a timber merchant was found with his head smashed in; not long afterwards an old lady was poisoned in Kensington. Superintendent Wilson disentangles this baffling double mystery.

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland
Street, London, W. 1.

Library

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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BLIND WORKERS NEED OPPORTUNITY

By ARTHUR E. WILSON

THE managements of workshops and institutions for the blind are being confronted with shortages of materials. The shortage has been most acute in the knitting departments. The Hosiery Rationing Committee have dealt very "sympathetically" with the needs of blind workshops and, prior to the rationing period expiring on the 28th February, a 100 per cent. ration (based on previous consumption) was allocated. During this rationing period, however, the allocation was reduced to 75 per cent., and it is understood that this will be still further reduced to 50 per cent. during the next period. Furthermore, it is not always possible to obtain from manufacturers the quantities of yarn allotted by the Rationing Committee. In consequence of this cut in allocation and difficulty in obtaining yarn, a number of blind knitters have already been thrown out of employment and many others are working on short time. This question was discussed at some length at a recent conference of representatives of various workshops, when it was decided to arrange an intensive course of training in the making of light baskets for instructors who would, in turn, teach the blind knitters this occupation. These good people are obviously much concerned at the plight of the blind workers, but one cannot help feeling that they are evading the difficulty instead of surmounting it.

The Minister of Labour is doing his utmost to mobilise the labour resources of the country to the best possible advantage. Blind workers are eager to share in the national effort. Every efficient blind worker in full-time employment means the release of so much sighted labour which can be diverted to more immediate war work. What is required then in this particular branch is that sufficient knitting yarn should be made available to blind institutions and workshops to enable competent knitters to be fully employed either on orders for the Ministry of Supply or for civilian purposes. All necessary representations should, therefore, be made and, if need be, pressure brought to bear to achieve this end. It is not sufficient to seek the "sympathetic consideration" of the needs of blind workers—that is not the point at present. What is required is that the Government should realise that it is possible for blind persons to help their country by releasing other workers for munitions, etc.

The case of machine knitters has been taken because the problem is becoming acute and many workers are affected, but there are others who are anxious to render service in this hour of national need and are prevented from doing so. They include masseurs, shorthand-typists, telephone operators, etc., who could be usefully employed, thereby releasing sighted labour for other work. In this connection it is necessary to draw the attention of readers to the manner in which many associations and institutions have failed to discharge their duty in this direction. A number of associations and institutions have persistently refused to employ suitable blind typists, home teachers or administrative officers. In peace time such conduct is bad enough, comprising as it does a breach of trusteeship and a betrayal of the cause they profess to serve, but in time of war such conduct constitutes an offence against the best interests of the country. There is little point in asking Government Departments and Local Authorities to employ blind persons if voluntary organisations supposedly devoted to the care of the blind refuse to do so.

Some little time ago the Editor asked me for notes on my work in the offices of the Lindsey County Council. I cannot say that it gives me much pleasure to comply with his request, as the request itself gives point to what has already been stated. A person without sight undertaking administrative work in a public office should not be a novelty to blind welfare workers.

I was introduced to the "blind world" at the age of seventeen years with an opportunity of training at the Royal Normal College. This was followed by a trial as a shorthand-typist in the offices of the Lindsey County Council which, being successful, resulted in an opportunity of employment, for which I was more than grateful. After a year or so of this work, I began to feel that I could undertake more responsible duties and I asked for an opportunity of doing so, and at a convenient time I was given this opportunity. By devising a system of filing which could be operated with equal efficiency by myself or a sighted clerk, and by endeavouring to use common sense and determination, I was able to carry out the work of committee clerk to the Blind Welfare Sub-Committee of the Council and assistant to the Hon. Secretary of the Lindsey Blind Society. My task was made very much easier by the guidance of the Chief Clerk of the Council, and Hon. Secretary of the Lindsey Blind Society, Mr. W. G. Key, who is an administrator with terrific drive and energy. For this wise and helpful guidance in the most difficult period, I shall ever owe a deep debt of gratitude.

The Council expects all clerks who wish to progress to sit for certain examinations, so it was obvious that I should conform with the rule—hence the passing of the examination of the National Association of Local Government Officers.

To those who are familiar with office administration it will not be difficult to realise that the higher up the ladder one proceeds the easier becomes the task of minimising the handicap of blindness. Having successfully held the post of committee clerk and assistant hon. secretary for a number of years, I asked that I might be allowed to extend still further my responsibilities at a convenient opportunity. With the raising of the age of reservation for military service of Local Government officers, I have been able to assist the Council by undertaking many of the duties of another committee clerk in addition to the blind welfare work. This is a temporary broadening of scope rather than a step upwards, but it is mentioned as a demonstration of the satisfaction which can be given, and the fact that we blind can be of service if—

I have used the word "opportunity" a number of times, for this is the whole point of these notes—give blind workers an opportunity of sharing in the national effort; give suitable blind persons an opportunity of undertaking responsible work; give the "blind world" an opportunity of benefiting from their abilities and you will not be disappointed.

Finally, a request. Will every member of committees concerned with the welfare of the blind who has read these notes, ask himself the question, "Has my committee at any time during the last few years, and particularly since the outbreak of war, given to a sighted person a post which could have been filled by a blind person?" If so, let him feel downright ashamed of himself and his committee, and see to it that it does not happen again.

Jewish Braille Review Short Story Competition.

Leopold Dubov, the organiser of this competition, has informed THE NEW BEACON by cable from New York that, on account of the war, the date by which entries from the British Empire and other parts of the world outside the United States and South America should be received in New York has been extended from June 1st to July 1st, 1941. Competitors are asked to send manuscripts in duplicate two weeks apart.

HOME NEWS

American Generosity Towards British War Blinded.—The British War Relief Society of America has made a most generous gift of £14,000 to the National Institute for the Blind, to meet the full cost of acquiring a house to be utilized as a second Home of Recovery for war-blinded civilians, and a further gift of £5,000, to meet deficits incurred by the Institute in running the Home or similar work. In honour of the donors, the Home will be called America Lodge, and a tablet will commemorate this shining example of American sympathy for the victims of war. The wording on the tablet will be repeated in Braille embossed on a plaque in the hall so that blind people may read for themselves the details of the practical generosity towards them of their cousins across the Atlantic, and it is highly probable that amongst the first Braille words to be slowly spelled out by the seeking fingers of the newly blinded will be the words of this inscription.

The National Institute hopes to announce the location of the second Home of Recovery at an early date,

Blind Fire Watchers at Norwich.—Inmates of Norwich Institution for the Blind are taking a share in fire-watching in the building.

"Each night we have on duty one senior male officer, two members of the domestic staff, two partially blind, and two totally blind boys," said Mr. R. C. Fanthorpe (Secretary and Superintendent) in an interview. "It was very pleasing to me when the boys made a completely spontaneous offer to help the sighted staff," he added.

"They have proved a great asset to us, as they have very keen sense of hearing, and have been trained to operate stirrup pumps. Watchers are on duty from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., and each one comes on the rota once in every four nights. We have installed our own warning system, and two of our blind girls take duty voluntarily to listen for this. Their rota gives them a turn once in every seven days."

Several of the male inmates are also doing their part in the "Dig for Victory" campaign. "They have helped in the recent digging up of one of our lawns," said Mr. Fanthorpe.

Cardiff Institution for the Blind.—We regret to announce that this institution was damaged extensively in a recent air raid on Cardiff.

Stars of the B.B.C. Greet Blind Pupils.—One of the most interesting and successful organisations in connection with the Glamorgan County Council School for the Blind at Bridgend is the school literary and debating society, which recently held its twelfth annual Eisteddfod.

The pupils love their society, which meets every Friday evening, and each year the chairman runs a surprise night.

This year the Chairman, Mr. H. V. Smith, persuaded celebrities of the B.B.C. to send greetings and messages to the pupils. The response was amazing. When pupils were asked which well-known broadcaster they would like to hear from, to their surprise and delight the Chairman read a personal message from a pile of letters he had received from broadcasters whose names are known to millions. At the Eisteddfod, these blind pupils displayed much originality in the dramas, written and performed, the tunes, stories, and poems submitted.

Easter Holiday Advice for Parents of Blind Children.—The following valuable advice is given by Mr. M. Blake, Headmaster of Court Grange School, Abbotskerswell, in a letter to parents:

"We sometimes find that the children who have gone home for a holiday have decidedly slipped back in their mental alertness and general health. Few parents realise how much their blind children are capable of, and how keenly they appreciate being entrusted with responsible jobs like washing up or cleaning shoes. A blind child need never be asked to sit still while everyone else is active. Also, your children are accustomed to a good deal of exercise, and will feel the need of regular walks. Above all, *never* let your neighbours say in the child's hearing, 'Poor little chap! It does seem a shame. . . Here's a penny for you!' Nothing is more harmful to a child's self-respect and happiness than to be publicly pitied. It is much better if he can be encouraged to show how much he can do without sight. Ask your friends to leave the expression of sympathy till the child is out of the room."

Northern Counties Association for the Blind.—The General Council met at Barnsley on February 27th, under the chairmanship of Councillor Clydesdale. After the delegates had been welcomed by the Mayor, they considered the Report of the Executive, and devoted the major part of their morning session to a consideration of the scheme for a Joint Industrial Committee. Some discussion took place as to respective representation on the Committee of the Local Authorities, the employing institutions and the National League of the Blind, and it was finally agreed that the Executive should be asked to redraft the proposed constitution of the Committee, in the light of the proposals made during the morning. Other matters debated at the session included the training and recruitment of home

teachers, evacuation, the war-blinded, and supplementary pensions. In the afternoon, a paper entitled *Agreements in Blind Welfare under the Local Government Act, 1933*, was read by Mr. Usher, Town Clerk of Halifax. After pointing out that local authorities might, under Sections 91 and 93 of the Local Government Act, combine for the purpose of providing workshops, homes and hostels for the blind, the speaker gave examples of how their powers might be put to practical use, and dealt with the three points upon which any authority will wish to be satisfied before entering into a joint scheme with any other authority; he outlined these as follows:—

1. Fair proportion of cost between the various authorities concerned.
2. Arrangements whereby an authority does not, by virtue of providing a workshop in its area, become liable for workers who leave the area of other authorities concerned in the scheme in order to live near their work.
3. Arrangements whereby some mutually satisfactory plan is made for liability for those who cease to be employed, and have moved into the area.

A discussion followed the reading of the paper, and the representatives were then entertained to tea by kind invitation of the Mayor.

War Damage Act, 1941.—As the War Damage Bill originally stood, Section 29 provided that property held for charitable purposes should be relieved of the compulsory contribution, but the definition of charitable purposes was a narrow one. It covered (a) relief of poverty, (b) treatment of sickness, disease or injury, whether physical or mental, (c) advance of religion, (d) advancement of education, science or research.

To comprise blind welfare services as falling under (b) would be to narrow their scope, and Mr. Clement Davies, M.P., speaking in Committee on February 5th, urged that the wording of the Bill should be so amended that Section 29 should apply to every Society exempted from payment of income tax on the far wider definition of a body of persons or trust “established for charitable purposes only.”

The Attorney General suggested that the amendment went too far, but said that so far as the blind were concerned, or any special institution which either now or later people felt would normally be intended to be covered, but which had not yet been covered, the Government would be glad to consider them.

It is satisfactory to note that as the Bill was revised, and the War Damage Act as it now stands is, from the point of view of blind charities, satisfactory. The relevant section (now 39) reads:—

“The charitable purposes to which this

section applies are charitable purposes of any of the following kinds, that is to say: (a) the relief of poverty; (b) the making of provision for the cure or mitigation or prevention of, or for the care of persons suffering from or subject to, any disease or infirmity or disability affecting human beings; (c) advance of religion; (d) advancement of education, science or research.”

It is obvious that the work of blind welfare societies is far more adequately defined as “provision for the . . . mitigation or prevention of, or for the care of persons suffering from . . . disability” than in the earlier statement, and workers for the blind will be grateful to Mr. Clement Davies and to the National Institute for the Blind for thus clarifying the position.

London Rotarians' £50 Gift to the Blind.—The Rotary Club of London (President: Rotarian R. E. Coombe) gave a valuable aid to Geranium Day, by inviting Sir Beachcroft Towse to address the Club at their Luncheon in the Connaught Rooms, on Wednesday, April 2nd.

Lord Nuffield, who was also a guest of the Club, because of his interest in and generosity toward the cause of the blind, speaking after Sir Beachcroft's address, summed it up by describing it as “Sir Beachcroft's wonderful speech.”

It very truly described the splendid address which Sir Beachcroft gave the Club. He paid tribute to the part the blind workers are playing in the national struggle, and made a most earnest plea for support in the forthcoming Geranium Day on April 8th.

Few people can speak with equal authority on the cause of the blind, and with his 40 years' work on behalf of his fellow blind, Sir Beachcroft told the story of the courage with which they fight and overcome their handicap, in a manner which held his audience with sympathetic interest. The President, Rotarian R. E. Coombe, read the Geranium Day message from Her Majesty the Queen, and asked Rotarians to join in making their luncheon gift an encouraging gesture for Geranium Day. His appeal brought the generous response of £32, and the President announced his intention of making the gift up to £50.

Rotarians are consistently generous toward all good causes, and a letter expressing the thanks of the blind has been sent to London Rotary by the Committee of the Greater London Fund for the Blind.

Other guests of the Club were Mr. R. Hyde-Thomson, Vice-Chairman, and Mr. H. J. Wagg, O.B.E., Hon. Treasurer, of the Greater London Fund for the Blind.

FOREIGN NEWS

Blind Italian Boys as Aircraft Spotters.—A special correspondent of *The Times* writes from the Italian frontier :—

“Fifteen blind boys who have just finished a course of special training at the Paulo Colosimo Military Blind Institute at Naples were given an enthusiastic send-off by a large crowd, including many military and Fascist authorities, who had assembled at the railway station to see their departure for the front. The youths wore the usual uniforms of the anti-aircraft defence militia. The well-known hypersensitiveness of hearing of the blind will be turned to practical account by this Italian experiment, for these

youths are to be employed in detecting the approach of enemy air raiders, above all at night; moreover, the effect of allowing blind persons to operate anti-aircraft equipment will be studied.”

Mozart's Music in a Talking Book Biography.—A unique biography by Mozart, in which the analytical illustrations from his scores are heard by the reader, rather than seen as musical notations, has just been prepared for the sightless men and women of the United States at the sound studio of the American Foundation for the Blind. It is the Talking Book version of Eric Blom's "Mozart," published on twenty double-sided, long-playing phonographic discs.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

The Blind Man and the Bees.—Lloyd Jones, a fifty-year-old blind man of New York, comes to the rescue of motorists and pedestrians when they are harassed by swarms of bees. Recently, bus drivers called Mr. Jones to remove a swarm of bees on a roadway near the Washington Bridge over the Harlem River. As usual, his eighty-five-year-old mother guided him to the scene. He scooped the bees into a carton with a bee brush while spectators watched at a safe distance. When he made a second trip to gather the rest of some 30,000 bees parked in the centre of the roadway and menacing safe driving they gave him "the works," he said. "The works," according to Mr. Jones, was when the bees got under the cuffs of his shirt.

Lord Kindersley's Thanks.—Jonathan Fisher, the blind young man of Cumberland, who, as announced in our last month's issue, collected £600 for war weapons in a tour of the hills and dales, has received the following letter from Lord Kindersley:

"I have been told of the splendid way in which you helped War Weapons Week in Carlisle. It was a grand piece of work and I know it must have been a heavy one for it is tiring walking up and down the dales. But you will be repaid by such a splendid result. This is the spirit that is going to break Hitler and all he stands for. I send you my hearty congratulations and thanks."

A Blind Heroine.—A reporter of the *Wolverhampton Express and Star* describes Mrs. Florence Grainger, a blind woman of fifty, as

"the bravest woman I have ever met." Recently the blast from a bomb in an air raid wrecked the back bedroom of her cottage in which her adopted daughter, a girl of sixteen, was sleeping. Mrs. Grainger, who is of fine physique, was in a downstairs room, but she hastily groped her way up the narrow, winding stairs—a difficult feat for a normal person—and snatched the girl from the bed by her hair, dragging her down the stairs.

"Heavy bedclothing had saved the girl from being cut to pieces," said Mrs. Grainger, "for glass and rubbish were heaped upon the bed."

But that was not all Mrs. Grainger did that night, since her presence of mind calmed a number of her neighbours who had rushed—as she and her husband and the girl had done—into a shelter.

"The house seemed to be shaking, and cracks were visible in the walls, my husband told me," she continued, "and we hurriedly gathered up some clothing, including blankets off a bed on the ground floor, and went to the shelter."

"There were signs of panic, because everybody was upset. They felt they were not safe in the shelter and threatened to run into the street."

"Suddenly I decided to have a faint, and I told my husband that I was going to do so. I pretended to swoon, and went 'off,' and then everybody helped me and forgot everything else. Of course, I have never fainted in my life."

St. David's Day Prize.—Peggy Pugh, of Merthyr, a blind pupil at the Glamorgan School for the Blind, Bridgend, was presented last

month by Sir William Jenkins, M.P., with the cheque she won in the St. David's Day *Western Mail* competition. Peggy is an exceptionally bright girl, and has shown by her success that one can overcome the most severe handicap with perseverance.

Liverpool's Blind A.R.P. Warden.—Arthur Small, a blind Home Teacher and Liverpool's only blind A.R.P. warden, has helped to rescue people from blitzed houses and guided the injured to the local doctor, says the *Daily Mirror*. So efficient is he that few realise he is blind. Now he is a blitz victim himself. His conscience may have saved his life.

It was his night off duty, but the crump of high-explosive bombs made him say to his wife, also a warden: "Let us go and see if we can help." They put two old ladies, bombed out from their own home, under the stairs and went out. Soon after a heavy bomb wrecked the house. Dodging bomb splinters, as though guided by a sixth sense, Mr. Small and his wife hurried back and rescued the old ladies. Later, alone, he led several of the wounded to a doctor and carried to safety a two-year-old baby, wrapped in an eiderdown.

Mr. Small, who is thirty-eight, told the *Daily Mirror*: "I do no more than I should. In addition to patrolling with my wife or another warden, I used to manage the 'phone switchboard and do other odd jobs. I feel I am not pulling my weight now. I have been evacuated to a strange district and have temporarily given up my A.R.P. work. I still attend wardens' meetings.

If I can find accommodation in my own neighbourhood I would like to be back on the job."

A Blind Nurse and a Blind Home Guard in Devonshire.—A blind lady in Barnstaple has passed three Home Nursing examinations, one in first aid, and one in anti-gas precautions. She spends four mornings a week at the North Devon Infirmary preparing vegetables and specializes in taking out the eyes of the potatoes. She has organized a "Penny a Week Fund" for the purchase of wool, and to date has herself knitted 154 scarves, 32 pullovers, of which 60 scarves and 15 pullovers have been paid for out of the fund.

A blind man at Crediton has joined the Home Guard and is proving himself extremely useful, he does most of the typing for his unit.

Blind knitters in Torquay and District have contributed over 500 comforts for the Forces and the Red Cross Supply Depot.

Dundee's Blind Players in Another Success.—Dundee's blind players showed exceptional ability in their performance of the three-act comedy, "Tullycairn," in their club hall, Step Row, says the *People's Journal*, Dundee.

"In their diction and easy stage assurance the members of the amateur dramatic society, Royal Dundee Institution for the Blind, enhanced an already high reputation. Their lines, which they had studied from script copied into Braille, were well learned. There were few signs of 'first-night nerves,' and their general enthusiasm was infectious." The author of the play, Mr. Joe Corrie, has been keenly interested in the performance.

THE TEACHING OF BRAILLE READING

By a Teacher in a Blind Institution.

IN the editorial of the March NEW BEACON, it is stated that, "to-day, when owing to the toll of war it is all too likely that many adults may lose their sight, it is specially desirable that the Braille teaching they receive shall be of the highest quality."

Perhaps this statement will open our eyes to the bad way in which Braille is sometimes taught to adults, even by certificated home teachers, thereby causing the pupil to feel hopelessly and unnecessarily discouraged.

As a pooling of ideas is suggested, here are a few which are held by some teachers:—

1. Never use giant Braille characters (nails or dots). It is true that the pupil may easily master them, but when the time comes to discard them and start on the correct sized ones, there is a vast discouragement felt, and it is doubtful

whether the giant characters have been of any help at all.

2. While it is greatly to be desired that teachers should have some proficiency in finger-reading, it is possible, that if that proficiency becomes too great, he may forget his early difficulties.

3. There is no need to memorise lists of contractions at all. The pupil must, of course, first learn to recognise every letter of the alphabet. Instead of following the order A to J, then K to T, it is often found better to give the letters first which are easiest to feel, i.e. A B C G K L M U and so on, keeping F J I for final letters, when D H E have been completely mastered. The next stage is the reading of two and three-letter words, and then a very short story or article, chosen according to the taste of the learner, but with as few long words in it as possible, e.g., an account of a football

match, an article from *Good Housekeeping*, an Æsop fable, a description of a new aeroplane, a funny story from *Punch*, or one of Keats' letters. It is probably better that this should be uncontracted, especially if the pupil is going to work at it by himself, the contractions being introduced gradually in subsequent passages; but I am sure that in the very first piece of Braille reading, Column 1 word signs should be used. How much easier it is to remember K = knowledge, than to spell out, with your fingers, K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E. At first it is

immaterial if the pupil is unable to read some words, as long as he gets the sense of the reading matter.

I once met an intelligent elderly man who had recently lost his sight and was anxious to learn Braille. He had been attending a Braille class in London and could repeat every contraction perfectly (e.g., dot 6n = ation, EI = either), but was unable to *feel* any letters of the alphabet. I think most adult learners will agree that it was not the memorising of the contractions that was tiresome, but getting the feel of them.

SOME SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENTS

By H. R. DRIVER

ONE cannot read any of the annual reports dealing with the education and welfare of the blind without at once realising what vast progress has been achieved in educating and training the blind. But in these days of enlightened commentary, of the wireless, the talking book and the gramophone record there come to my mind a few suggestions which I trust will bear consideration by those in a better position to judge their merit than myself. First, in order that my suggestions may be viewed in their right perspective, perhaps I may be excused a short autobiographical note.

I am 28 years of age, and from February, 1920, to July, 1928, I received my elementary education at Henshaw's Institution for the Blind, Old Trafford, Manchester. At the same Institution I was subsequently trained, and in 1934 passed out as a pianoforte tuner and repairer. While not for one moment wishing to run down my old school, I doubt very much whether the standard of the elementary education attained in my time would meet all the many splendid recommendations laid down in the report on the Education of the Blind, 1936; hence my continued interest in all such matters.

A Braille Encyclopaedia

My first suggestion is that there should be a Braille edition of an encyclopaedia. For the more advanced students there are, in Braille, books on almost every subject: Science, Literature, Law and Languages, to mention only a few. Average young people do not wish to climb so high; yet, if they could have access to an encyclopaedia, what a happy hunting ground, what an unlimited wealth of general knowledge they would possess! A mere smattering of knowledge on one particular subject, thus found and conned unaided, may well be the means of a child's aspiring to greater

heights. Such a book would be a most valuable addition to any school library, and it may be that there are many older blind persons like myself who would gladly welcome the publication of such a work.

I fully realise the "bulkiness" that the Braille of such a book would entail in its entirety, but here the National Institute could use its own discretion and, for example, publish two volumes at a time periodically to see how the venture progressed.

The Development of the Talking Book

My second suggestion is that all Schools for the Blind should have, as part of their equipment, a talking book. The present high standards attained in the recording of sound, together with the advent of the talking book, have, to my mind, opened up the door to a new and vast world of enlightenment and interest for all blind people. I am not suggesting that such possibilities have not occurred already to the minds of those directly responsible for the talking book; but I feel sure that the National Institute will welcome any ideas coming, so to speak, from the ranks.

From time to time I have derived much pleasure, and not a little benefit, from listening to the B.B.C.'s Broadcasts to Schools, with their accompanying many varied "Feature Programmes" on widely separated subjects; and it was through such listening that I began to realise the great possibilities, almost limitless in their scope and interest, opened up by the talking book.

With the co-operation of the B.B.C. Council for School Broadcasting, it would be possible for attractive feature programmes to be duplicated for the talking book, so that all schools could have their own library of recorded illustrated subjects, to be used by the teacher in school time. Let us take a look at an ordinary school syllabus and see just how my idea could be applied to one or two subjects.

Geography. Personally I was always keen on Geography, especially when it concerned the British Isles; but to many of my contemporaries "Jogger" was very dull, so that having to learn to recite by heart all the counties, together with the chief towns, was a perfect bore. For example, Yorkshire was almost a poem in itself, and went like this: York, Leeds, Halifax, Bradford, Wakefield, Sheffield, Ripon, Harrogate, Hull, Beverley, Scarborough, Whitby, Huddersfield and Doncaster. Now if we could have had something in the nature of a recorded tour of this famous county, together with a spoken commentary, we should not only have learned the names of those towns and their whereabouts, but also just what this or that town was noted for. Recorded features like those of the "Made in Britain" series given some time ago by the B.B.C., would add enormous interest to the studying of British industry; similarly, equally attractive lessons on the life of an English village, town or city could be modelled on the lines of the very popular Edith Macqueen's "Our Parish" series.

History. History lessons could be brightened and enlivened by the use of such recorded features as those written for School Broadcasting by Miss Rhoda Power and Mr. Hugh Ross-Williams, while records of famous Parliamentary speeches would help more than any text book in the teaching of the history and growth of our parliamentary system. In fact, there is no ending to the possibilities afforded us by the talking book, so I will be content with just one more illustration.

The Object Lesson. When I was at school we had in a glass case, which we called the Museum, things like an elephant, a cow, a horse and a sheep; I think there was also an occasional bird or two, all stuffed, of course. Well, I suppose by now that all our schools have models of anything, from animals and birds to ships and locomotives; but what of the sounds made by these animals and things? By means of our talking book a complete encyclopaedia of sound could be made, from the mere dropping of a coin or the filling of a glass with water, to the roar of a modern aircraft engine or the sound of a factory plant in modern industry.

Of course such a venture, even if it be accepted as an idea, needs organisation and development, but I do not propose to dictate ways and means to those in a more favourable position to judge; I merely suggest that the possibilities outlined above be examined and considered in the light in which they were conceived, which briefly amounts to this: They spring from a simple but fervent desire to contribute something to the education and wellbeing of my fellows in affliction.

Adaptation of Games

I have two other suggestions of a more general character to make. First, that the National Institute for the Blind continue to do all in their power to encourage the blind to take a keener interest in sport and games of all kinds. Already there are many games in Braille: ordinary playing cards, draughts, chess and dominoes, to say nothing of the more recently adapted "Lexicon," "My Word," "Sum-It" and the like. There are heaps of other indoor games on the ordinary market which could be, and I am sure would be, adapted for the use of the blind if only the demand for such were sufficient.

Many of our blind people keep themselves too much to themselves; let us come out of our shells and take a bigger interest in entertainment and social affairs generally. Life can be a very happy affair if only we will come out into the open. I am sure of one thing, and that is, unless we *do* come out into the open and thereby show seeing people just what we *can* do, we shall not create that feeling of confidence among them in our ability to do things. That there is such a lack of confidence in our abilities is often made apparent to me by the frequently ridiculous questions put to us blind people by unenlightened persons.

Railway Maps and Guides

Lastly, I suggest that there be put into Braille relief (similar to the late G. R. Boyle's process) a map of our railways, or, failing this, something in the nature of a guide book to our railways. To illustrate my meaning: if I were to travel from St. Pancras, London, to Kettering I know (through use) that I should pass Kentish Town, St. Albans, Harpenden, Luton, Bedford, Wellesborough and so to Kettering. But if I had to travel from Paddington, London, to Bristol I should only have a vague idea that I should go through Reading and Swindon; the rest of the journey would be nothing to me at all. If I knew reasonably well through what places I should pass, then that journey would become alive for me; besides, there would not be that need for me to keep asking my fellow-passengers "What station is this?" and so forth.

It may be argued that there is no demand for such a map or handbook, and I know well that in the past the blind have not been encouraged to travel alone on the railways; but the growth and spreading of the splendid Guide Dog movement will in time create such a demand for the putting at our disposal such information.

In conclusion, I hope I have interested some, and not bored others; I am no orator, neither am I even a man of letters, but if I have sown the seed for the merest grain of ideas, then I am well rewarded.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

FROM many fields of human activity and industry the blind are apparently debarred. People without sight cannot be soldiers, sailors or airmen; they cannot drive cars and locomotives or be builders of bridges; they can have little to do with applied mechanics and chemistry; nor can they take much part in any preponderantly physical activity. But they can take a big part, a much bigger part than they have yet taken, in the vast fields of mental activity which lie behind, beside and before every field of physical activity. It is entirely within the scope of the blind to storm in legions the fortresses of thought.

The average person is a muddled thinker. The minds of most of us are a maze, and at every seductive turning we are liable to be lured from the straight way of a thought down shady side-paths of tangential ideas. And chief of the enticing will o' the wisps is sight. It is probable that a man who has lost his sight finds mental concentration in any environment far easier than it was when he had his sight. When we are deep in thought, we do not, in fact, see or hear. We become enveloped in thought, wrapped from the visible and the heard, rapt to the invisible and the unheard.

There is nothing, then, to prevent a blind man from becoming a master of theory, the begetter of most action. The greatest theologian, the greatest philosopher, the greatest poet, the greatest mathematician, the greatest statesman, the greatest lawyer—even the greatest military strategist and the greatest physicist—could all be blind. Loss of sight, and what is less obvious, lifelong lack of sight, need be no hindrance to vision. The processes of thought are not dependent on sight, but several of the processes of translating thought into action are completely dependent on sight. It is therefore essential for a blind realist to retain or acquire a sound knowledge of the customs and terminology of a sighted world.

The blind man's main source of knowledge is Braille. He can gain much useful information from hearsay, the wireless and the talking book, but he cannot, as yet, study intimately, intently and remotely without Braille. The talking book will probably be developed to such an extent that it may equal and excel Braille as a convenient source of knowledge, but, at present, the Braille book is the one sure means by which a blind person can nourish his processes of thought on knowledge.

But here we come up against an obvious limitation. Despite the representative and copious array of reading matter made available to the blind in Braille by the National Library and by the National Institute, in its publications and its Students' Library, the mass of books in Braille is but a mere flea-bite to the mass of books in letterpress. How then can a blind student hope to be on equal terms with a sighted student when confronted with such an overwhelming handicap in his grasp for knowledge?

Mainly, because the knowledge that is wisdom is not created by books but only nurtured by them. Sometimes, indeed, it is nurtured so richly that it is overcome by a surfeit, and all original thinking is lost in the flood of others' thought. Nevertheless, the handicap must be recognised, and those concerned with the welfare of the blind should do their best to lessen it. This is being done already by the careful selection of Braille literature and by concentration on students' individual requirements for special needs. But much remains to be done, and we think a beginning should be made in a new direction—the preparation of a library of books specifically and scientifically compiled for the blind.

A contributor to this issue of *THE NEW BEACON* suggests that an Encyclopædia should be issued in Braille. It is an admirable suggestion because a Braille Encyclopædia, or encyclopædic dictionary, is a necessity in the systematic acquisition of general knowledge. But when we look at the imposing majesty of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and think of the bulk taken by Braille, we quail before the task. The publication of an adequate and scholarly Encyclopædia in Braille would, in fact, be an almost impossible task if we simply took the letterpress volumes and began the transcription and gradual publication of every article from A to Z. We can just imagine the length of the beard grown by the blind youth who, having assimilated the article on Biology, patiently awaits the sub-section on Zoology! That way confusion lies. Competent selection and compression are obviously needed if a Braille Encyclopædia is to be a practicable proposition, and next month we hope to include in *THE NEW BEACON* an article making some practical suggestions on how and by whom such selection and compression of encyclopædic knowledge could and should be made.

THE EDITOR.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Standard English Braille.

SIR,—Self-introduction is odious, but I regret very much that I have to do so in the common interest of the cause of the blind in India and elsewhere.

I was a member of Harvard Class (1931-32) in the Education of the Blind, organised and taught by Dr. Edward E. Allen, D.Sc., a world-renowned educator of the blind. I am a member of the College of Teachers of the Blind, London, and a professional member of the American Foundation for the Blind, New York, U.S.A.

I have been keeping in constant touch with the ink-print publications, relative to the work and education of the blind, of the National Institute for the Blind, London, the American Foundation for the Blind and other institutions.

I have been connected with the education of the blind in India since 1928, and I am familiar with the rules of English Braille, existing prior and subsequent to 1932, when English Braille was standardised for all English-speaking countries. We have, therefore, discarded in our School the use of English Braille books embossed in the years prior to 1932, but we follow the Standard English Braille Grades I and II, revised and edited jointly by the British National Uniform Type Committee and the American Committee on Grade II, representing the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, the American Association of Workers for the Blind, and the American Foundation for the Blind, published by the National Institute for the Blind, London, in 1932.

We feel very glad that the two friendly countries on both sides of the Atlantic have come to an agreement regarding the use of a Uniform English Braille. Without making any reference to other desirable changes that Great Britain and America had agreed to undergo in the interest of the common cause, I would like to refer to Rule No. 1 on page 5 and Rule No. 12 on page 7, under general rules of the Standard English Braille Grades I and II, published by the National Institute for the Blind, London, in 1932. They read as follows:—

RULE NO. 1: PUNCTUATION SIGNS, HYPHEN, APOSTROPHE, etc.: In the use and order of these signs the practice of ordinary print *must* be followed.

RULE NO. 12: THE CAPITAL SIGN, dot 6,

when used, is placed immediately before a letter to indicate a capital. The capital sign may be doubled before a word or Roman numeral containing more than one letter to indicate that all the letters are capitals. Contractions may follow a capital sign, it being understood that only the first letter is a capital.

Though I am conversant that the use of the capital sign does take a space more than it would usually take without it, yet I feel inclined to comment on the wisdom of using this capital sign under the new rules and discarding the rules that were prevalent before 1932 for at least three reasons:

1. Its use makes the pupil conversant with the fundamental rules of punctuation, and incidentally

2. It helps the child to take the usual University Examinations when he has to dictate his answers to an amanuensis who is always a sighted person. In an examination paper, no use of capital sign whenever it is necessary in black print is considered as a serious error in composition.

3. A blind typist, with other fundamental knowledge and skill, would become a better typist with the knowledge of "when to use a capital sign" and the other rules of punctuation.

Because of my connection with the Perkins Institution for the Blind, Watertown, Mass., and other institutions of the U.S.A., I receive for the use of my School many Braille publications free or at a nominal cost. These institutions follow the Standard English Braille as revised and edited in 1932. I get infant primers in English from the Howe Memorial Press of the Perkins Institution for the Blind which strictly observes the rules of Standard English Braille and particularly the rules regarding the use of the capital sign and other punctuation signs.

In December last, my school was visited by a man from Great Britain, Mr. William Bell, Principal of the Victory Memorial Blind School, Madras, and an expert in Braille printing. He had come to Bombay at the invitation of the Government of Bombay in connection with the drawing up of a scheme for a workshop for the adult blind. To my greatest surprise, he disapproved not directly but more by implications the present method of using the capital sign according to rules, and thus reverting to the old method which existed before the British and American standardisation had taken

place. He suggested that the capital sign is not used by *Progress*, a magazine embossed in Great Britain, and we in India should follow the same practice. I for myself cannot realise why a practice (if it is a practice at all) which is not in accordance with the rules of the British National Uniform Type Committee and the American Committee should be followed in Great Britain.

In the spring of 1933, when I had been visiting the leading Institutions for the Blind in London and its neighbourhood, I noticed that some teachers of the blind were very critical of the few changes Britain decided to undergo, though the changes had to be undergone both in Britain and in America to arrive at a Standardised Code. I, however, was confident that through the good offices of the British National Uniform Type Committee, the National Institute for the Blind and the College of Teachers of the Blind, London, the different institutions and individual persons would forget these little differences. But I am surprised to find that the dissension has grown so great that our visitor, an expert in Braille printing, did not hesitate to suggest that the rules now prevailing should be discarded in favour of the old ones.

The matter seems to be so important that I thought that it should not go unobserved by the National Institute for the Blind and other able and influential bodies.

Yours, etc.,

R. M. HALDER,
Principal.

Dadar School for the Blind,
Dadar, Bombay, India:

To the Editor.

The Value of Moon.

SIR,—I have been interested to read the correspondence re the reading of Braille *by touch* by sighted people. Surely all those who want to help the blind to read with their fingers, whether Braille or Moon, should themselves be able to do so! Finger-reading is what matters to the blind reader, and only those who have mastered it themselves can appreciate the little difficulties that arise. I sincerely endorse all that Helen Chalmers advises, with regard to sighted Braille Writers *and* Teachers learning to read by touch, but I would go further, and add that Moon type should also be learnt by touch by those who have the privilege of helping the blind folk. I find Moon is much neglected, and for the newly blinded, whether young or old, educated or uneducated, Moon is the quicker way to learn to read, and to develop the touch, and so teach the fingers to do the work for the eyes. I have already taught two war-blinded women to read Moon, one only 22 years of age,

the other middle-aged; one a factory girl, the other a lady of independent means; and it is such a joy for them to be able to read for themselves once more, and without a lot of study, which would have been impossible for them at the time after the shock of the bombing. If I had started with Braille they would have been too disappointed at the slow progress to go on. Once Moon is read with ease, then encouragement can be given to go on to Braille, but many can get all they want in Moon type, such as the weekly paper, monthly magazines and hundreds of books.

The usual argument against Moon is that it cannot be written, as can Braille, but few blind folk want to write Braille, especially the newly war-blinded. They need the special writing frames for ordinary writing, one of which I always give to newly blinded cases with whom I come in contact, and, as with the Moon quick reading, they are so pleased to be able to write quickly to their own people once more. For this purpose Braille would be useless, unless their friends and relatives learnt it too!

Another argument for teaching Moon in the beginning is that the sighted relatives of the blind person are interested and give much help, as they can so readily understand it, whereas with Braille, the rest of the family usually leave it severely alone, and the blind person finds it a lonely, irksome task, instead of a pleasure.

I may add that I am a voluntary (sighted) transcriber for the National Library for the Blind, and helper in my own town, and I read both Braille *and* Moon by touch, and enjoy it, especially in bed!

Yours, etc.,

MABEL C. BURNES HOLLAND.

7, Ellenborough Gardens,
Weston-s-Mare, Somerset.

To the Editor.

The Blind After the War.

SIR,—There can be very few people who have not at some time or other thought about the kind of world that is likely to emerge from the present conflict. It is generally agreed that there will be great changes after this war just as there were after the last one, and that some system will have to be devised whereby men and women can live happier and fuller lives.

Although conditions in our own little world of the blind have improved much in recent years, they are still far from being as good as they ought to be. Many capable blind people are unable to obtain employment and therefore cannot help feeling that they are a burden to society. The employment of others is uncertain. One result of this must be that many who would

gladly buy the goods produced by the National Institute for the Blind cannot afford to do so, which is unfortunate for all concerned.

There have been many indications in the past of the difficulties encountered by workshop authorities in their efforts to find a market for their goods, and so provide the blind with continuous and remunerative employment. The position of the blind worker is not unlike that of the handloom weaver in the early nineteenth century, each having to compete with the machine. It seems certain that after the war most people will not have as much money to spend as they had before it. Now when one is short of money, one does not as a rule buy a new article if the old one can be made to last a little longer. This perfectly natural tendency to economise may perhaps make it harder for workshops to sell their goods, though there is really no reason why it should, at least not for long. The old article wears out at last, and must be replaced by a new one. Although it is often more economical in the long run to buy the dearer of two articles, most people probably choose the cheaper. Clearly, then, if the goods made by the blind are to be sold at a reasonable profit the cost of production will have to be kept as low as possible. This could no doubt be done in various ways, but surely the best way would be to introduce into the workshops industries in which goods are made by machinery. As very many industries are carried on in this way, it should be quite possible to choose some which would be suitable for the blind. As the goods produced would be cheaper than those made by hand, it would be easy for workshops to dispose of them profitably. The older industries need not be given up, but could be continued as a useful side-line. Many blind people who are now classified as unemployable could be given work which would make them self-supporting. They would then feel that they were citizens in the fullest sense of the word.

There is no doubt that blind children ought to be as fit physically as seeing children. One way of achieving this end would be for all school authorities to insist that the food given to the children should be properly cooked. In the past this matter has not always received the attention it deserves, as many blind people can testify.

We all hope that after this war things will be better than they were. If these hopes came true, surely the blind may reasonably expect that everything possible will be done to improve their lot, and enable them to be the good citizens that they know they can be.

Yours, etc.,

W. H. JONES.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Joseph Pugh, of Islington, a St. Dunstan's ex-Service man blinded at Ypres in 1916, who, with his wife, was killed in a recent air raid on London. This is the first air-raid death among St. Dunstan's men.

The **Rev. Thomas Gladding**, of Heaton Norris, who had been blind for nearly twenty years. He was formerly at Stamford Street Methodist Church, Ashton-under-Lyne.

Miss Adeline George, of Aberdare. Losing her sight when a young girl, she taught herself Braille and typewriting. She preached regularly at the Beulah Faith Mission and at other chapels, and was one of the most active members of the Aberdare Social Centre for the Blind.

George Carter, of Westerham Hill, aged 76. Mr. Carter was organist and choirmaster at the St. George's Royal Garrison Church, Woolwich, from 1895 to 1925. Blinded as the result of an accident, he was educated at the Royal Normal College and received training in singing, piano-forte and organ playing. Under his leadership the music at the Garrison Church reached a high standard and was celebrated throughout the district. His ability and unfailing courtesy made him an ideal choirmaster. When he retired he was presented with a cheque by a grateful congregation.

William Harrison, better known as "Blind Billy," of the Friendship Inn, Keadby, aged 52. He was noted throughout North Lincolnshire for his outstanding talent as a pianist, and fishermen, sailors and bargees from many parts have gathered at the little Trentside inn to hear his informal concerts of classic and popular tunes. Twenty years ago he came to Keadby for a fishing trip of two or three days, but stayed for the rest of his life.

Stewart Macpherson, F.R.A.M., formerly Professor of Harmony and Composition at the Royal Academy of Music, and founder and first Chairman of the Music Teachers' Association, aged 75. He was Dean of the Faculty of Music, London University, for three years, and had held various important posts in connection with musical education. From 1903 to 1921 he was Professor of Musical Composition at the Royal Normal College for the Blind, and for many years he was a much valued member of the Music Consultative Committee of the National Institute for the Blind. He was a member of the governing body of the Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music, London, and had been a director of the Royal Philharmonic Society.

OLDHAM WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND

By BEN PURSE.

IT is now generally recognised that workshops for the blind are an integral part of our welfare services. It is so transparently foolish to talk about their abolition that those who were accustomed to do so a few short years ago, have been proved to be voices crying in the wilderness, quite unheeded. This does not mean that we should be unmindful of the efficiency with which they should be conducted, for more than ever to-day is it necessary that their existence should be justified, because they are, or should be, economically and efficiently managed. Trade losses are still a serious concern to all who are interested in such administrations, and there is still far too much complacency revealed in this connection. Some time ago the writer of this article was discussing the situation with a well-known workshop manager, complaining that the losses incurred were providing the most effective ammunition for a handful of people who wished to see workshops as such disappear from the social system. The only futile rejoinder this manager could make was to reply: "Well, after all, it doesn't matter very much. If I fail to make ends meet, I will simply turn on the municipal tap." This is the kind of thing we had in mind when referring to the complacent attitude of workshop managements, but fortunately those who hold such views are in a minority, and they cannot hope to survive because of the more intelligent attitude which is assumed towards the subject by the more responsible people who are now in charge of these undertakings.

One of the younger men who is now the manager of the Oldham Workshops for the Blind certainly does not share that attitude of indifference and complacency of which we have spoken, for during the six years he has been in charge of this institution it has been transformed out of all recognition from the lackadaisical, *laissez-faire* attitude which previously characterised the undertaking.

This workshop was established for the employment of men in 1883, and it was not until twenty years later that a workshop for women was brought into existence entirely as a result of the initiative and enterprise of the late Mrs. Lees and her daughter, Miss Margery Lees, who continues still to be actively interested in the work. It is one of our duties and interests to read a large number of reports of institutions, societies and agencies for the blind each year, and we have just had the pleasure of perusing

the annual report of the Workshops for the Blind of Oldham for the year 1939-40. It is an unusually interesting document, written with a simplicity and directness that always appeals to the plain man. Knowing the manager, Mr. C. A. Coward, as we do, we would not expect any other kind of statement from him: he is a blunt Lancashire man with a keen business outlook that is altogether refreshing. Though as yet the workshop could not be described as a large undertaking, its growth is steady and continuous, and the trading transactions show a gratifying increase year by year. At the workshops for men, New Radcliffe Street, Oldham, there are forty-two workers employed, including a small number of apprentices. The workshop for women provides employment for thirteen. A minimum wage is paid to all employees, and a fixed scale is in existence for the remuneration of apprentices and home workers. The employees of both sexes are fully occupied and have been for a very long period. The women's workshop is not less busy than the other establishment, and we are informed that for knitted goods 750 orders are awaiting execution. Industries practised are those usually adopted by institutions for the blind, the only doubtful occupation being that of wood-chopping and bundling, which under the most favourable conditions must give grave concern to any management. Nevertheless, during the past year the trade turnover was approximately £12,660, as compared with £11,006 for the previous year. The gross profit during the year 1939-40 amounted to £3,460, and the net trade loss was only £60, after allowing for depreciation £423, special repairs £18, and A.R.P. expenditure £114.

During the last financial year economic earnings, augmentation, supplementary grants, etc., paid to blind workers amounted to £5,433, and augmentation and supplementary grants to home workers amounted to £205.

We understand that although some negotiations were in progress in previous years with a view to municipalising the workshops, no practical steps have yet been taken, and we think it is true to say that there is no institution under municipal management in the country that can present such a satisfactory financial statement. If and when municipalisation comes, it is ardently hoped that the trading transactions will continue to be as successful as under voluntary control.

PERSONALIA

Dr. J. E. A. UNDERWOOD has been appointed by the President of the Board of Education to be Senior Medical Officer to the Board in succession to Dr. J. A. Glover, who retires this month. Since joining the Board's staff in 1925, Dr. Underwood has taken special interest in questions of defects of vision and hearing in children. He was Secretary to the Departmental Committee on Defective Vision in Children in 1925 and since 1928 has been specially responsible for advising the Board on questions relating to schools for blind and deaf children. In 1931 he was Secretary to the Committee which inquired into problems relating to partially sighted children and the Report of that Committee in 1934 was largely his work. He represented the Board of Education at the World Conference on the Welfare of the Blind at New York in 1931.

* * *

Mr. SAMUEL JACKSON, Secretary-Manager of the Swansea and South Wales Institution for the Blind, is shortly leaving Swansea to take up the position of Secretary-Superintendent of Northampton Town and County Association for the Blind.

Mr. Jackson, who came to Swansea two years ago from the Municipal Workshop at Burnley, Lancashire, has done a great deal of work for the Swansea blind, and, chiefly through his efforts, the debts of the Institution have been reduced by £3,000.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The British Empire and the War.

Under this title, a lecture was recently delivered to the Historical Association by a distinguished blind man, Mr. C. M. MacInnes, Reader in Imperial History at Bristol. In it, Mr. MacInnes sets out to show how British Imperialism has conferred upon the world two outstanding benefits—in self-government for the Dominions, and in the principle of trusteeship for more backward countries; and he goes on to expound how, in recognition of this, all parts of the Empire have made their contribution to the war effort, and rallied to the support of the Motherland in her time of peril. It seems a pity that Mr. MacInnes begins his address with a vehement attack on the anti-imperialist; for to describe anti-imperialism as held merely "by

crazed and darkened minds of maniacs," compared to whom Lord Haw-Haw is "a mere beginner in the art of falsification," is to spoil a good case by exaggeration. The speaker strikes a finer note in the later part of his address, when he appeals to his readers to study questions of Empire, approaching them fairly, "zealous always to discover abuses and to see that they are reformed, and to confute our enemies and detractors by the clear light of truth."

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

Servers of the Blind League.—On the outbreak of war it was anticipated that the work of the Social Centres of the League in the London area would be almost at a standstill owing to evacuation; but it was soon discovered that only half of the blind left London, and another half of those who did leave returned very soon. These needed perhaps more than ever the services the clubs can render to counteract the gloom of bombed homes and nights spent in shelters, so that the social centres are once more greatly appreciated. In Worthing and in Hastings, new clubs have been opened for evacuated Londoners.

The Home for Mentally Defective Children at Reigate has remained full. The teaching of simple weaving and the training of the older girls in the elements of domestic work have been two successful experiments of the year.

Empire.

Victoria Memorial School, Tardeo, Bombay.—The Report for 1940 shows that there are 75 pupils, mainly Hindus, though members of other faiths are also accepted. New industries (added to the cane-work, sewing, tape weaving and bidee-making already on the curriculum) include netting, gardening and threadbutton-making. The school has its own orchestra, which has had the distinction of broadcasting a programme of its own compositions. Other out-of-school activities include the production by the pupils of their own weekly magazine, visits to the cinema (of great help to the senior pupils who compose orchestral tunes on the lines of modern cinema music), and daily physical exercises in the school gymnasium. During the year under review, the school was visited by Sir Clutha Mackenzie, who described it as "a good foundation for . . . a greatly widened field of opportunity for India's many blind."

Foreign.

Institution for the Chinese Blind, Shanghai.—

The Report for the three years 1936, 1937 and 1938 has only recently arrived, probably owing to the troublous times through which the Institution has been passing since the outbreak of hostilities in China in August, 1937. The story of these times, with their days of hurried evacuation and the horrors of bombing, is told in the Report, and no longer reads like a tale of unhappy far-off things that belong to some nightmare existence, and cannot touch us personally. "The incessant sound of guns and bursting of bombs from air-planes will never be forgotten. . . On the very day we had planned to hold our Jubilee celebration I watched the shells fired and fall on our building, tearing great gashes in the roof and walls." It all has a hideously familiar ring. Early in 1938 the superintendent, Mr. George Fryer, who has many friends in England, returned to America for a time in order to raise money towards the re-building of the damaged premises, and at the time of writing the Report this work of reconstruction was well under way. The Report closes with the brave words: "We enter this new year full of hope for the future."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music are in accordance with a revised schedule of prices for Braille music. They represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production, and are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dances :	s. d.
18253 H. Charles and L. Towers. When your train has gone. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> o 6	
18254 J. Monaco. Only Forever. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> o 6	
18251 C. Tobias and A. Lewis. Rumpel-stiltskin. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> o 6	
18252 H. Warren. Down Argentina Way. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> o 6	

BRAILLE BOOKS.

The prices represent the actual cost of production. Blind residents in any part of the British Empire are charged one-third of the quoted price.

The following books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed, paper covers.

Braille Pandas :

18299-301. No. 38. The Epic of Dunkirk, by E. Keble Chatterton. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net. Limited edition.

Fiction :

18113-6. Mr. Skeffington, by "Elizabeth." 4 vols. 5s. 9d. per vol. F226.

MOON BOOKS.

4410-4. Macgilligan Strand, by G. Birmingham. 5 vols. Limited edition.

4415. The Tree, by Grey Owl. 1 vol. Limited edition.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

	vols.
Biography:	
Birkenhead, Lord. By Ephesian	2
Charlton, An Autobiography	4
Classics :	
Plato : The Protagoras	1
Economics and Commerce :	
Pringle, W. Henderson : Introduction to Economics	1
English Literature :	
Du Bos, Charles. What is Literature ?	1
Swift, Jonathan. Gulliver's Travels	4
History :	
Marriott, J. A. R. Evolution of the British Empire and Commonwealth	5
Logic and Philosophy :	
Hartmann, Nicolai. Ethics. Part II. Moral Values	6
Stocks, J. L. Time, Cause and Eternity	2
Miscellaneous :	
Belfrage, C. Away from it All—an Escapologist's Diary	4
Bolitho, H. Roumania under King Carol	2
Dower, K. C. Gandar. Amateur Adventure	2
Einstein, Albert. The World as I see It	2
Morton, J. B. Pyrenean	3
Modern Languages :	
First Year French for Adults	2
Poetry and the Drama :	
Ervine, St. John G. The Lady of Belmont	2
Ibsen, A. Master Builder	2
Shakespeare. Notes to Romeo and Juliet (J. E. Crofts)	2
Oxford Book of Christian Verse. Ed. Lord David Cecil	5
Political and Social Science :	
Angell, Norman. You and the Refugee	4
Chamberlain, Neville. Struggle for Peace	6
Vidler, A. R. God's Judgment on Europe	2
Science :	
Mitchell, P. Chalmers. Childhood of Animals	3
Theology and Religions :	
Rogers, G. L. Studies in Paul's Epistle to the Romans	9

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND.

35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

Owing to the fact that some copies of "The Jewish Braille Review" have lately failed to reach readers in Great Britain, the Jewish Braille Institute of America are arranging with many of their American readers to mail their copies of the magazine to Great Britain, in the hope that some of these copies may arrive.

At the request of the Jewish Braille Institute of America, the National Library for the Blind has gladly agreed to receive these copies and distribute them to British readers who make application for them.

The Jewish Braille Institute also requests British readers to send their copies of the magazine to the Library when they have finished with them, for distribution, as certain copies may have reached some readers which failed to reach others.

The National Library hope that all readers of the "Jewish Braille Review" will co-operate in this plan.

O. I. PRINCE,
Secretary and Librarian.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

31st March, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	1
<i>One application under consideration.</i>	
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Southport ..	3
<i>Two applications under consideration.</i>	
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate ..	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea ..	—
<i>(Applications from blind persons and their guides for periods of rest can now be received).</i>	
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring ..	6
HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.	
Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield ..	—
Thomas Briggs Lomas Home, Glensanda, Rhyl ..	—

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Home Teacher required for rural district, must be able to drive car. Application stating age, qualifications, etc., to be sent to the Secretary, 13, Market Place, Devizes.

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

SPECIAL NOTICE TO HOME TEACHERS: Those awarded the Diploma prior to 1932, and who desire a Refresher Course in Braille, are invited to apply to H. N. Vickerstaff (as above) for particulars. (Stamp for reply.)

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL. PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Appointment of Home Teacher for the Blind.

The Council invite applications from women (sighted) for the above appointment. Candidates should possess the Home Teachers' Certificate.

The person appointed will be on the staff of the County Medical Officer of Health and will be required to pass a medical examination and to contribute to the Local Government and other Officers Superannuation Act.

Salary £150 per annum, rising by annual increments of £7 10s. to £200 per annum, with travelling and subsistence expenses according to the County Scale.

Applications, stating age, qualifications, and experience, to be sent on or before 28th April, 1941, to the County Medical Officer of Health, County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames; envelopes to be endorsed "Home Teacher for the Blind."

DUDLEY AUKLAND,
Clerk of the Council.

County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames.
5th April, 1941.

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND wishes to appoint a woman with experience of blind persons and in blind welfare, as Assistant in its Homes Department. Apply with testimonials, stating salary required, to Secretary-General, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.



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and Mr. David Low.

BRAILLE PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 40.—A Book on the Bible for Everyman, by the Rev. E. R. Micklem. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

The author of this illuminating and topical book says that the Bible way of looking upon God and the world and man is strange to present habits of thought. Yet the Bible is of priceless value to all because it has a direct bearing on a pursuit common to all, the pursuit of living, and opens the eyes to the beauty of the world of the spirit, in which alone we can find our ultimate fulfilment.

No. 41.—The Battle of Britain, August-October 1940. 1 vol. 6d. net.

This straightforward but intensely thrilling account of a battle which "future historians may compare with Marathon, Trafalgar and the Marne," is issued by the Ministry of Information on behalf of the Air Ministry. It has sold in hundreds of thousands and been translated into many languages, and was written by a well-known writer of "thrillers."

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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BLIND WORLD—FACT OR PHRASE

By LAURANCE R. WATSON.

A RECENT editorial in this journal discussed the question to what extent the term Blind World has significance. It was there suggested that, whether or not it were applicable to the sum total of blind people, it was certainly applicable to that sphere of effort engaged on welfare work carried on in their behalf. In this restricted sense there can be no reasonable objection to the appropriateness of the term. Here it is clear and definite if not altogether euphonious. But in this context it comprehends a very small proportion of those who are without sight and includes quite a large number of sighted people. This may be inevitable, or again it may not. At present, whatever the future may bring forth, *quod omnes tangit ab omnibus approbetur* is not true in this sphere.

But is the term Blind World justified to describe the generality of blind people? If such people do in fact form a homogeneous community, possess a collective consciousness, an identity of purpose, then there is a Blind World, and the term—or a synonym—is justifiable. It is very doubtful if blind people do form such a self-conscious community, whether there is, in fact, apart from convenient nomenclature, a Blind World. Doubtful if there is; but not, perhaps, so doubtful that it would be an advantage if there were. More doubtful whether such a community can ever come into being.

Members of this minority (word of fell import) do not all find themselves born into it as do the members of racial minorities. They become eligible at various ages, bringing with them varied experiences. This fact alone checks the growth of a community consciousness. And there are other obvious deterrents: as, for instance, the difficulties of getting together. Blind members of an institution, be it college or workshop, will inevitably develop a co-operative life, undergo an identity of experience, which might form the basis of a Blind World; but these are only small groups and their collective consciousness as blind men, women or children is dependent on their being together in one place.

Probably, however, the greatest obstacle to the idea or feeling of a Blind World comes from blind people themselves. In the editorial to which these remarks are but a pendant,

it was stated that some blind people have strong objections to the phrase Blind World because they consider it implies a world apart and different from the ordinary everyday world and suggests segregation. This objection, easily understood, is presumably directed in reality at the idea behind the phrase. That is, they dislike the implication that there is such a thing as a Blind World. It is fairly apparent that a self-conscious community cannot exist if a number of those who would be among its members dislike its existence. Whence springs this dislike?

An attempt to find the answer necessitates a pilgrimage on controversial, if not indeed stony, ground. The word that may provide the passport to this inhospitable terrain is the word "normal." We blind people like to be thought normal. How often have we heard and read or, with temerity, said or written something to this effect: "Apart from their lack of physical vision, blind people are no different from their fellows. They have the same hopes and fears, the same varied temperaments, the same potentialities for good and evil," and so forth?

But such affirmations, true in a measure, emphasize similarity and under-state difference. After all, apart from that which makes them different everyone is alike. This kind of statement implies, and is usually meant to imply, a limited divergence. In reality, the divergence of those who cannot see from those who can is very great. Sight is one of the few channels through which impressions of the outer universe are received. The possession or lack of this means of contact with and understanding of the surrounding universe must of necessity make a tremendous difference, and to stress similarity while relegating such a vital dissimilarity to a subsidiary clause is sentimental if not actually silly.

If by normality we mean possession of the ordinary faculties and a conformity of behaviour, it is patent that a blind man is not normal. He receives his impressions of the outside world through one less medium and his behaviour is modified on this account in a multitude of ways. In this connection dangerous analogies are often drawn between blind people and those with artificial legs or others unable to learn languages. It is argued that blindness entails no greater divergence than do these defects. But such analogies are unsound. Risking tiresome recapitulation, it must be insisted that in such cases, although activity of one sort or another is restricted, the primary channels of sense impressions are not impaired.

It is all too easy to find examples to illustrate the variations from the normal in those without

sight. Consider a blind man wishing to cross a busy street or board a 'bus. Are his actions normal? Or, again consider the peculiar twist implied in ordinary phrases when spoken by blind people. "May I see you home?" when requested by a blind man of a sighted girl has a connotation other than the usual one, and to that extent is not normal. To labour the point by illustration of this kind is a little crude. But crudeness does not always or altogether come amiss on a subject so often enveloped in polite miasma.

The question of compensation may be urged as bridging the gap between the blind man and his seeing fellow-citizen: that his deficiency in one faculty is offset by an increased functioning of and a heightened awareness through the others. Insistence upon this theory of compensation is beloved of those who treat blindness in a pious manner. Whether or not it is grounded in physiological fact is probably uncertain. But the use of such a theory as an argument to demonstrate the normality of blind people is obviously invalid, since it presupposes an abnormal development of certain faculties.

The constant insistence on normality by blind people might also be used to illustrate that the reverse is the case. Such insistence is far from normal. One to whom the speaking of English is a natural and everyday occurrence does not find it necessary—nor does it ever enter his mind—to emphasise his ability to speak English.

It is no purpose of this article to condemn this attitude; merely to point out that the attitude exists and to suggest that while it persists the formation of a self-conscious, identifiable blind community is unlikely to come about. Nor is there any intention to imply that, apart from the absence of physical vision, blind people are in any way peculiar. The majority of us are probably normal blind people, but not normal people—which is another thing. Of course, one could sabotage this part of the discussion by maintaining that the desire to appear no different from the average man or woman itself constitutes normality in blind people.

It is in no way a foregone conclusion that the realisation of a community, aware of its divergence from the greater world and aware likewise of its common needs and interests, would be altogether to the advantage of the individual. Such awareness might tend to an undue stressing of separateness. There can be little doubt, however, that one good result would follow: that blind people themselves would have more say in the various branches of welfare work designed for their benefit and thus gradually merge the technical with the actual Blind World.

HOME NEWS

London Association Factory Destroyed.—We regret to learn that the London factory of the London Association for the Blind has been destroyed by enemy action. For the time being all the workers and the administrative staff have been found accommodation in the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women, 19-21, Crawford Street, London, W.1.

Cardiff Institute for the Blind.—We learn with regret that the premises of this Institute were not, as reported last month, simply damaged, but were totally demolished. The Institute has secured accommodation in other parts of the town and many of the men and all the apprentices are back at work. The address of the Head Office is 20, City Road, Cardiff.

Fire at Halifax Society's Premises.—Serious damage was done by fire last month at the premises of Halifax Society for the Blind, Savile Park. In spite of the efforts of the fire brigade, assisted by the A.F.S., the interior of the works was destroyed and a great deal of the material badly damaged.

Blind Babies' Home Bombed.—One of the Institute's Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies "in the North-West of England" received a direct hit from a bomb on the night of the 26th April. That the Home was situated far from any military target in a reception area did not save it from the attention of Hitler's airmen. The bomb hit the roof fairly and squarely and only the fact that it burst outside, possibly on a chimney stack, instead of exploding after penetrating the building, saved the lives of the children. Most regrettably three young probationer nurses were killed (see page 71) and two others were gravely injured. The Matron, Miss Mary Smith, was slightly injured and severely shocked. Mrs. John Knapp, Chairman of the Institute's Homes Committee, was in the Home at the time of the disaster and played her part with others in rescuing the children, all of whom fortunately were on the one side of the house the walls of which stood up after the explosion. The local Police and A.R.P. workers, together with the staff of the Home, gave magnificent service in getting the children out of the ruins. The Institute has expressed its gratitude to the Civil Defence Committee and the local Police. A number of the children were cared for at the Southport Infirmary and a number of others at a neighbouring Barnardo's Home. The authorities of the Infirmary and of Barnardo's have also been thanked by the Institute for their help.

Most happily, the Institute was able almost at once to make arrangements for the transfer of the children and of the survivors of the staff to a house most beautifully situated in a Northumberland valley. The new address is Whitfield Hall, near Hexham, Northumberland. There ample accommodation has been put at the Institute's disposal by Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Blackett-Ord, whose prompt and generous help in the emergency has been of the utmost value. There it is hoped the children will remain until the War is over. They will have the priceless benefit of country air and country food and there is every sign that not only their hosts, but also the inhabitants of Whitfield will take the babies to their hearts and do all in their power to make good the misfortune which drove them away from Southport.

Back Through Bombs to Save Savings.—A blind man, bombed from his home, walked half a mile back through shrapnel and bombs to find a box containing his savings and family treasures. The story was told by two men who guided him to safety after helping to rescue him from his house, demolished in a recent heavy raid on a South Coast area.

Lowestoft Home Teacher Seriously Injured in Air Raid.—Miss E. V. Pye, Home Teacher in Lowestoft and district, sustained grave injuries whilst carrying out her honorary duties as air raid warden during an air raid last month. She has always entered into her A.R.P. duties with the greatest enthusiasm, and was helping to put out incendiary bombs when she was caught up in the blast from a high explosive shell. It is doubtful whether she would have survived the night had she not been rescued by a sailor who was passing by. She is now in Lowestoft Hospital. Fortunately her spirit is splendid, her nerve being unaffected by her dreadful experiences.

"America Lodge"—the Home of Recovery at Torquay.—The generous gift of the British War Relief Society of the United States of America to the National Institute for the Blind for the extension and maintenance of its work for war-blinded people, announced in last month's issue of THE NEW BEACON, has been used in the first instance for the purchase of "Kingston Lodge," Torquay. "Kingston Lodge" was originally a private house built by Mr. J. R. Walker and has for some years past been a private hotel. It stands in a large and secluded garden some hundreds of feet above sea level in the district known as The Lincombes, the actual address

being Middle Lincombe Road. It will accommodate some 30 residents in addition to staff. Rapid possession has been obtained; Miss G. Norman, formerly Matron of the Tait Convalescent Home, Broadstairs, has been appointed Matron; and the first guests are already in residence. The house is to be re-named "America Lodge" in honour of the donors, and there will be an opening ceremony at an early date.

In addition to men and women blinded in air raids, accommodation will be offered, so long as it is not required for air raid victims, to blind persons from bombed areas who have suffered shock. The National Institute is willing also to give accommodation at "America Lodge" and at other Homes of Recovery to workers for the blind—in particular, home teachers—from badly bombed areas who require a short period of rest to recover from the strain to which they have been subjected. Details of "America Lodge" and of other Homes of Recovery have been sent to Local Agencies for the Blind and Local Authorities concerned with their welfare.

Third Home of Recovery at Bridgnorth.—The National Institute for the Blind has acquired "Oldbury Grange," Bridgnorth, as a third Home of Recovery designed to serve, in particular, the industrial areas of North West England. "Oldbury Grange" is a commodious house standing half a mile outside Bridgnorth in grounds and meadows sloping to the south. Staff is being appointed and the house should be opened for its new purpose at the beginning of June.

The Braillists at Bournemouth.—A brief note in the February NEW BEACON reported that some of the Braille Services of the National Institute for the Blind would in future be carried on at Bournemouth. It may now be recorded that the transcribing of Braille books and music, the Students' Library, and certain other services employing skilled Braillists, are established in a most convenient house, formerly a hotel, in Bournemouth, and that the work is being carried on in a very happy community atmosphere. Miss J. L. Glazebrook is in charge of the work generally, Mr. P. T. Mayhew, the head of the Music Department, is there with his music transcribers and correctors, and Miss G. M. Wilson succeeded Miss G. Norman as Matron when the last-named was appointed Matron of "America Lodge," the Home of Recovery at Torquay.

The Loxley Grange establishment was fortunate in finding already in residence at Bournemouth a number of friends who had close contact with the Institute and had been rendering services to it for years past. The Bournemouth Blind Aid Society

received the friendly invasion in a most kindly spirit, and a joint reception was held at the house on April 24th. Mr. Homer, Honorary Secretary of the Bournemouth Blind Aid Society, welcomed the Institute's workers to Bournemouth. The Institute's Secretary-General, Mr. W. McG. Eagar, replied, emphasising the unity which had now been achieved between the national body and local societies throughout the country.

Among the many friends of the Institute who welcomed the workers to their new home was Mr. Leslie Goodwin, and through his kind offices a most enjoyable concert was given, arranged by Miss Eve Hunter of the Palace Court Theatre. Miss Daphne Urquhart gave some very clever sketches, Miss Eve Hunter and Mr. Mickie Deane sang solos and duets, two blind artistes, Miss Irene Luff, L.R.A.M., and Miss Joyce Frew, L.A.B., L.R.A.M., contributed piano solos and songs. Mrs. Young was the very clever accompanist.

In the evening the N.I.B. residents at Loxley Grange made a presentation to Miss Norman, by whose energy the house had been prepared for them in record time, and the Secretary-General took the opportunity of thanking not only her for the admirable work she had done but also Miss Glazebrook for her management of the business of the temporary department.

Home Teaching Students Reserved from National Service.—MISS ELEANOR RATHBONE asked the Minister of Labour, on April 24th, whether he has considered the resolution communicated to him, on April 10th, by the Joint University Council for Social Studies and Public Administration, asking for the reservation from National Service of women students proposing to enter on recognised courses of training for social work; and whether he had been able to agree to this?

MR. BEVIN: Yes, sir. Women taking vocational training courses in social service, including housing estate management, or work as hospital almoners, club leaders, health visitors, welfare workers, child guidance workers and home teachers for the blind, will not be asked to abandon their studies as a result of their registration under the Registration for Employment Order, 1941. In my view these students will in general best serve the national interest by completing their courses of study.

Good Wishes to the National Institute from New Zealand.—The following is an extract from a letter recently received by the National Institute for the Blind from the Wellington Braille Club, New Zealand: "Our thoughts are constantly with all in the Old Country who are going through such trying times, and with our blind friends there. We may not have met them all personally, but we still look upon them as

our friends, and think of them. Please accept every good wish."

Generous Offer to English Institutions from the United States.—Several Institutions for the Blind in England have received the following letter from the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind: "Dear Fellow Worker,—We, in the United States, have watched with deep interest and profound respect the strength and fortitude of the English people in these trying days. We realise more than ever before the importance of our historical ties with the British Isles and the common front for the defence of our culture which is being challenged to-day on the very threshold of your own land.

"As we have watched this conflict from a relatively safe and happy existence our thoughts have gone forward to those handicapped friends, who in peaceful and prosperous times have had barely more than the minimum means of sustenance for a fruitful living, and we are wondering if there is any way in which we can be of help to our handicapped friends. We mean specifically in a material way. We know that you are proud and would hesitate in asking for help, but we do not consider such requests among brothers a question of pride. Please let us know if there is any way in which we can be of material assistance to you in the problems you face.—Very sincerely yours, M. D. Frampton (Principal)."

1941 Record Geranium Day.—Geranium Day, 1941, held throughout the Metropolitan Police area on Tuesday, 8th April, in aid of the Greater London Fund for the Blind, has produced (to date of going to press) the sum of £10,200. This figure is more than £2,000 in excess of the amount raised in 1940, and constitutes a record maximum total over any previous Geranium Day.

This splendid achievement has been made possible by the generosity of the public and the untiring efforts of the voluntary Geranium Day workers. When one considers the problems of wartime conditions which confronted the campaign, the result stands out in even greater significance. It has been truly said of enemy action that "London can take it," and the result of Geranium Day, 1941, shows that notwithstanding the Nazi blemishes upon the fair face of London, Londoners are sound and generous at heart, and that the cause of the blind is one to which they ever respond with practical sympathy.

Her Majesty the Queen, Patron of the Greater London Fund for the Blind, again most graciously received Miss Violet Vanbrugh, Chairman of the Fund's Social Theatrical Committee, at Bucking-

ham Palace at 11.30, and accepted from her a beautifully decorated basket of Geranium Day flowers, and made her own contribution. The Queen, at the opening of the Geranium Day campaign, had sent a letter of encouragement to all taking part in the effort, and enquired closely of Miss Vanbrugh concerning the needs of London's blind.

Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., accompanied by his niece, Miss Bertram, made a South London tour of the badly hit areas, in which he was kindly conducted round by Mr. David A. Abrahams, who lent his car for the occasion. Sir Beachcroft's party was entertained to luncheon by the directors of Messrs. Jones & Higgins at Peckham.

In conformity with the Queen's request to Miss Vanbrugh when she received her on Geranium Day, Her Majesty has been notified of the result of the appeal. The following letter has been received in reply: "I have to thank you for your letter of yesterday, and to inform you with what great pleasure the Queen has learned of the extremely successful result of your collection on Geranium Day. Her Majesty is well aware both of the great need of the blind and of the devoted service which your Fund brings to their aid."—Arthur Penn, Acting Private Secretary to the Queen.

Annual Reading and Writing Competition.—The Mission to the Outdoor Blind for Glasgow and West of Scotland held their Annual Moon and Braille Reading and Writing Competition in the offices of the Mission at 201, Buchanan Street, Glasgow, on 17th April, when, considering the critical times in which we are living, a fairly representative number of candidates from the Mission's widely scattered area came forward and took part. The Competition comprised tests in Moon Reading, Braille Reading and Writing, and Pencil Writing.

Mr. John R. Young, Honorary Treasurer of the Mission, and Mr. Wm. R. Young, retired school master (both expert braillists) were the examiners.

At the close of the Competition Mr. James Irving, Superintendent of the Mission, in a few words introduced Miss M. A. Brodie, President of the Ladies' Auxiliary, who presented the prizes to the successful competitors; while Mr. D. M. Ritchie, Teacher for Dunbartonshire, moved the votes of thanks, which were warmly accorded.

Blind Woman's Farthing Collection.—Miss C. Maunder, a blind woman of Dawlish, has collected 1,100 farthings for the Exeter Farthing Breakfast Fund during last year.

WAR EMERGENCY GRANTS FUND

THE National Institute for the Blind has established a Fund under the above name from which grants can be made to blind people affected, in mind, body or estate, by enemy action. It is now evident that, although provision for compensation to victims of air raids is conceived on generous lines and although Local Authorities and Agencies generally are dealing promptly with distress in their areas, a number of blind people have incurred losses for which no compensation is obtainable. The War Emergency Grants Fund has been constituted to assist such blind persons through the responsible Local Agencies.

To establish it in the first instance, a generous gift to it has been made by Sir Beachcroft Towse from the gift made to him for the assistance of the blind in war-time by Lord Nuffield. The National Institute has added a substantial contribution, and both Sir Beachcroft and the Institute have agreed in principle to supplement the Fund later if necessary.

Applications for grants from this Fund should

be sent to the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1, and marked "War Emergency Grants Fund." Applications will be dealt with by the Institute's Assistance Department which, following its usual practice, will not make any grant without consultation with the Local Agency concerned, and applications should, therefore, as a rule be made through the Local Agency or by it on behalf of the persons affected. It will, of course, be understood by all concerned that the War Emergency Grants Fund is intended to meet necessities which cannot otherwise be met under the Government and Local Authority schemes (including the Lord Mayor's Fund) for compensation and relief. In the case of blind ex-service men and blind dependents of ex-service men, mention should be made of this fact when applications are made, so that the assistance of the Sir Beachcroft Towse Ex-Service Fund may, where necessary, be sought.

Fuller details of the principle governing the administration of the Fund will be sent to Local Agencies on request.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Miss Mavis Park, home teacher with the Newcastle and Gateshead Home Teaching Society for the Blind, who was killed in a recent air raid on Newcastle.

Arnold Knill Turner, of Boston, aged 75, a former Mayor of the Borough and a tower of strength to the Boston and Holland Blind Society. Mr. Turner came to Boston in 1888 and was a bank accountant there until 1913, when he retired on pension owing to gradually oncoming blindness. In conjunction with Mr. G. A. Mitchell, a blind piano tuner, he founded the Boston and District Blind Society which shortly became the Boston and Holland Society. Having learned typewriting and Braille, he became secretary of the Society, which position he held until 1930, and thenceforward was a keen member of the Society's Committee. It was largely through his efforts that "Sunniholme," in Pen Street, was opened for the care of the blind of the county. In 1922 he entered the Town Council and was elected Mayor in 1925. He took a particular interest in the housing of the poor, and with others founded the Boston Housing Society and arranged with the Town Council for five council houses to be let inclusive of rates at 5s. a week in perpetuity to poor people badly housed, £105 being paid to the Council

for the cost of erecting each house. For some years Mr. Turner took charge of a small Congregational Church in the village of Kirton, and he was a member and Senior Deacon of Red Lion Street Congregational Church, Boston.

Recently he wrote a pamphlet entitled "Christian Citizenship," dealing with present-day conditions and future prospects. He submitted it to the National Institute for the Blind with a view to its publication in Braille, and the Institute, impressed by its merit, decided to issue it. It will be published during the next few months. The knowledge that his essay would be made available to his blind fellows gave great pleasure to Mr. Turner in the last days of his life.

Albert Siddall, of Rochdale. "With the passing of Mr. Albert Siddall, of Rochdale," writes a correspondent, "not only the blind, but all who worked for their welfare have lost a valued friend and colleague."

"In his immediate sphere Mr. Siddall guided the affairs of the Rochdale and District Society for the Blind and he, himself blind almost from birth, knew, and was known by, all the blind in and around his own town.

"But his influence and interest extended far

beyond, as his membership of national and regional organisations showed. He was an influential member of the College of Teachers of the Blind and also of the Executive Committee of the Northern Branch of the National Library for the Blind. Outside Rochdale, however, he was chiefly known as a foundation member and former Chairman of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind. Working through this medium, Mr. Siddall was able to make a magnificent contribution to the section of the blind welfare service which was closest to his heart, the profession of home teaching, and the status which it has now achieved is due in no small degree to his untiring effort. His death will leave a gap which will be hard to fill. His happy knack of enabling those associated with him to forget his disability made for easy comradeship, and he will long be remembered by many blind men and women for the spontaneous acts of kindness which were so characteristic of him. It now remains for us to carry on the work in which he was so engrossed in the knowledge that by so doing we pay to him the tribute he would most desire."

Miss Mary Ann Smith, of Clacton, aged 91. When she was a little girl she became blind and learned to play the organ. Quite near her birth-place was the Fulham Infirmary Church, and she was organist there for 30 or 40 years. Wonderful at crochet work and dainty handwork, she has left behind her some beautiful examples of her skill. The war brought her to Ashford and there, despite her great age, she knitted garments for Ashford soldiers and their children.

Miss Z. Ethel Grimwood, of Hove, editor of *The Braille Packet*. Her interest in the blind was aroused some 40 years ago through coming into contact with one who was deaf and dumb as well as blind, whom she became extremely anxious to help. She learnt to talk on the fingers, carrying on long conversations, and she soon came to realise that the blind, and particularly the deaf-blind, were placed at a great disadvantage through being unable to read the newspaper for themselves. She started, about the year 1906, *The Braille Packet*, with the help of a number of voluntary writers, as a hand-written magazine, consisting of articles taken from the best newspapers. But the demand proved so great that it became impossible to make enough copies, and in 1914 the magazine was machine transcribed. Many hundreds of copies are now produced, and it is read by thousands of blind people in all parts of the world. This work was only one of Miss Grimwood's many activities on behalf of others, but the blind were always nearest to her heart. She herself was threatened with blindness in later

years, but fortunately this was averted by an operation. In Ethel Grimwood the blind have lost a friend of deep sympathy and understanding.

Miss Emily Mary Hayden, of Worcester. "She was," says a life-long friend, "a truly remarkable woman. She had all the qualifications necessary for the business career which she chose in her early life, but after a few successful years she had to face failing eyesight. She underwent 14 operations over many years, only in the end to have to brace her will to face complete blindness."

"Only those who knew her will realise what this meant to one of her independent character. At this stage she was brought into touch with the vicar of St. Paul's, Worcester, the Revd. (now Canon) J. Hunt, to whom she used to say she owed everything, because he helped her to see how her great limitations could be used in the service of God, and it is true to say that the last 20 years of her life, spent in darkness, were the richest, and the centre of it all was her religion."

"She learnt to write in Braille and to read in Moon type, so that she might continue to read the Bible, which she loved so well. She gradually possessed almost the whole Bible in Moon type, and rose very early each morning so that she might read from the Bible and have time for her prayers before her many visitors began to call. All sorts of friends, young and old, came to her for advice and to benefit by her rich experience."

"The result of her hours of reading and quiet meditation was revealed by the many poems and hymns which she wrote, and year by year she had some of them printed and sent to many friends and sufferers all over the world so that thousands of people benefited from her quiet hours in prayer. Some of these poems have appeared in the Moon and Braille magazines."

Miss Jean Everingham, Miss Joyce Hughes and Miss Dorothy Powell, three young nurses who recently lost their lives by enemy action, at one of the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies. Miss Everingham (17) had been a year at the Homes and was looking forward to a nursing career; Miss Hughes (16) was the Home's youngest probationer and had also been there for one year; Miss Powell (16) had already been for two years at Sunshine House. All three had shown themselves devoted to the babies in their care, never sparing themselves in the interests of the Home, and most loyal members of the staff. It is indeed grievous that three young lives, full of promise for the future, should thus have been the victims of war.

BLITZ CAMEOS

A LAND-MINE fell in a North London square. It reduced what had been a fine church and substantial houses to heaps of rubble, smashed glass and blasted ruins. Dozens of other houses in the vicinity were flayed by the tail of the monster, and in one of these lived a blind woman of 71.

What Mrs. S. had thought about Hitler since September, 1939, would never get past the Censor, but what did she think of him now? So on to Mrs. S., who was happily quite unhurt, but white and shaken, and sitting in the wide open spaces—and it *was* a cold day—of a windowless, ceilingless room. Now the pride of her life had been her sideboard top, covered, in pre-land-mine days, with cheap glassware of every description—tumblers, butter dishes, sugar bowls, water jugs—but “Ichabod” was writ o’er them, for they had joined the window glass. As for Hitler . . . ! But Mrs. S. sat among the ruins looking like a conqueror. To an anxious “Don’t you think it would be better to go into the country with your daughter? This is so dreadful for you,” she fairly snorted “NO! ‘Ttler ain’t goin’ to drive me from my ‘ome. I’m not a-goin’ out of ‘ere unless they CARRY me out.” She hasn’t been carried out. The glass has been swept up, the ceiling patched up, the windows blocked up, and Mrs. S.’s chin is still up. She listens to all the news bulletins, makes short but telling comments on Hitler, his probable ancestry and certain destiny, and carries on. She is the Spirit of London.

* * *

Then Mr. W. and his delicate wife. September 1940, London in the Blitz—not so good. Evacuate? Yes, but what would the house and furniture be like with no one to look after it? Jerry removed that objection with another land-mine, so into the country went the W.s, grieving for the annihilation of thirty years of choosing and consulting—years when Mr. W. had his sight and earned good money. (“What about that mirror? It would look nice over the mantel-piece. Can we afford it?”) All their little treasures, rich in memory and association, worthless but irreplaceable—gone.

But the W.s came back. “You see, other people’s places aren’t like your own home. We got some compensation and bought a few things, and we must just make do. The wireless set you got for us was salvaged, and isn’t damaged at all—funny, isn’t it? So we can listen to the news. We *should* have missed that set. Bombs? Oh, yes, they get them there, and what a fuss they make about them! They ought to come to London to see what a real raid is like. Well,

it can’t last for ever, and anyway Germany must be a bit chipped by now.”

* * *

“I do wish you could persuade John to be evacuated. These raids aren’t doing him any good, and I could arrange for him to go to Wales.” Thus John’s mother.

“Evacuate? Not me! What I say is, if London is good enough to live in in peace time, it’s good enough to live in in war time. I don’t believe in all this evacuation.” Thus John, aged 21.

* * *

Mr. L. was an officer in the last war, which wasn’t the last. He is over 70 now, and in poor health. He scorns Andersons and cellars. One night when he was lying in bed a land-mine fell (do they keep them all for North London?) and the house disintegrated round him. He managed to struggle out in pyjamas and dressing gown, all that was saved of his belongings, and eventually found sanctuary in another house in the same neighbourhood. When he was settled in and traced: “Oh, Mr. L., I am so glad to find you safe. What a ghastly experience for you. I expect you do go into the Anderson now?” “I do as I have always done—go to bed and go to sleep. They dropped a bomb a few yards down the street last week. Did you see the wreckage as you passed, or perhaps you didn’t come that way? Yes, three houses down, and a lot more damaged. It shook this house, but haven’t we got some guns on the job!” (Technical—on Mr. L.’s part—discussion on Ack Ack guns.)

* * *

So London’s blind carry on. Sightless, many weak and old, who shall think they are not taking their part in the fight for life and liberty? It is theirs, also, to say:

*Rejoice, whatever anguish rend your heart,
That God has given you, for a priceless dower,
To live in these great times and have your part
In Freedom’s crowning hour.*

H. V.

A BRAILLE ENCYCLOPÆDIA.

Owing to pressure on space, it has not been possible to include in this issue the article referred to in last month’s issue as making some practical suggestions on how and by whom the selection and compression of encyclopædic knowledge could best be made for publication in Braille. The article will, it is hoped, be included in next month’s issue.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Press Secretary to War Savings Committee.—Mr. Robert Varndell is nearly blind. So, useless to the Army, he looked round to see what he could do to help the war effort. The Saving Campaign caught and held his attention, and he is now the Press Secretary to the Lambeth War Weapons Week Committee and a representative of Norwood and Brixton Savings Committee. He takes his notes in Braille shorthand and his typing is faultless.

Blind Swimming Enthusiast.—Few men are as well known in the swimming world as Mr. Bob Marshall, of Burnley, and even blindness, which has overcome him only in recent years, does little to curb his energies on behalf of the sport. *The Swimming Times* has learned something of Mr. Marshall's efforts to prevent the Burnley Swimming Club from disbanding, and in the April issue of the magazine fine testimony is paid to his work. Early last year, learning that the Burnley club was likely to crack up after a hard effort to carry on, with a debt of about £100 hanging over it, Mr. Marshall stepped into the breach caused by youth having a more serious job of work to do, and gave those who remained a courageous leadership which has resulted not only in clearing off the burden, but in having a pass-book with a credit balance. "In ordinary circumstances," comments *The Swimming Times*, "hearty congratulations could be showered on Mr. Marshall for such a life-saving effort—the Burnley club has a magnificent record of service in Northern history—but when one considers the enormous handicap under which he labours it is doubtful whether any further expression of gratitude can swell the intense feeling of satisfaction he has derived from the success attained; yet, the facts becoming known, he may rest assured that hundreds of swimmers the nation through will inwardly express themselves—'What an achievement, especially for a blind man.'"

Sinclair Logan Secures the Turpin Prize.—In the March issue of THE NEW BEACON it was announced that Mr. Sinclair Logan, Musical Director at Swiss Cottage School for the Blind and B.B.C. broadcaster, had obtained the Fellowship diploma of the Royal College of Organists. It has since been learned that his success was crowned by a further distinction in gaining sufficient marks to secure him the Turpin Prize.

Blind Organiser of Salvage Collection.—Mr. Edmund Balls, of East Runton, Norfolk, has since June, 1940, carried out a systematic collection of salvage in Runton and the surrounding neighbourhood. Since September he and his wife have done the work alone; they set out each afternoon, visiting the same area once a week. With their pneumatic-tyred barrow they have collected 3 tons of paper which has been sorted by Mr. Balls in an old barn lent to him for temporary storage. In September a jumble sale was arranged which resulted in £10 10s. being made for the local Spitfire Fund. In November another realised £10 for the local First Aid Post. Scrap iron collected has brought in £2 6s.; newspapers, magazines, loose paper and bones have realised £10 5s. Another jumble sale held a few weeks ago has been very successful; Mrs. Balls washed and mended many salvaged articles, chiefly of clothing, and made them saleable, while other contributions included three onions, which, when raffled, added 23s. to the total! Mr. Balls has now in hand from sales since September and this recent jumble sale, the sum of £36 8s. With this he will carry out the purpose for which he has been working, the provision of a steel wheeled stretcher for the local First Aid Post. The interest underlying the effort, and the regular exercise, have kept Mr. Balls in excellent health: he and his wife may be congratulated on such a result of a winter's work.

Fine Musical Success of "Court Grange" Pupil.—Robert Eves, a pupil of "Court Grange," Abbotskerswell, the National Institute's Special School for retarded blind children, has obtained the A.L.C.M. Diploma with an 82 per cent. pass. He is to continue his education at the Royal Normal College for the Blind, as soon as there is a vacancy.

Brighton's Blind Civil Defence Workers.—That the blind people of Brighton are willing to "stay put" and "do their bit" is proved by the following facts:—

One blind man has become well-known for his services as "roof-spotter" on a Brighton factory. In the darkness his keen hearing quickly picks up the sound and direction of the hostile raider.

Another blind man is a fully trained A.R.P. Warden, capable of efficiently carrying out his duties in conjunction with his sighted companions.

Yet another blind man has been appointed Fire Marshal for two districts. His job is to organise the street fire watchers, notifying them of their various hours of duty, and seeing that the arrangements are effectively carried out. He accompanies his Fire Squads to their tests

and receives the Fire Chief's O.K. as to efficiency. He has been taught typewriting, and is able to send out his letters and instructions. All general notices, etc., appear on a notice board outside his house.

Many of Brighton's blind men and women are voluntary blood donors. One of these, a woman of over 65 years, has received special commendation from the hospital, as it seems her blood is of exceptional value in making tests. She is happy to report to the hospital whenever she is wanted.

Blind men in Brighton are anxious to play their part in the fire watching of their own streets, and many have been trained in the use of the stirrup pumps and are quite ready to take their places with sighted companions in the street fire parties.

PERSONALIA

MR. ARTHUR WRIGHT, A.R.C.O., late pupil of the Swiss Cottage School for the Blind, has been appointed Organist and Choirmaster at St. Chads Church, Sutton Coldfield. Like Mr. Wright, who took up his residence at Sutton Coldfield as an evacuee, two former pupils of the school, MESSRS. PERCY and ARTHUR BRAGG, evacuated to the village of Sible Hedingham in Essex. Their evacuation was compensated by the opportunity, which they seized, of acquiring a good ready-made teaching connection of long standing. In addition, Arthur was offered, without the chance of refusal, the post as organist of St. Peter's, the village church, for as long as he remained in the district.

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MR. WILLIAM HENDERSON, a blind organist of Lennoxton, has been appointed Organist and Choirmaster of Moncrieff United Free Church, Alloa.

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CAPTAIN SIR IAN FRASER, C.B.E., M.P., Chairman of St. Dunstan's, has again been appointed a Governor of the British Broadcasting Corporation. This time, owing to the war, the appointment will not entail retirement from the House of Commons as it did last time.

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MISS DORIS F. MARSHALL, of March, has been appointed successor to Miss C. N. Whittome as Secretary to the Isle of Ely Society for the Blind. She has been a teacher at Doddington School for many years. Miss Whittome's appointment

to the Hampshire Society has already been announced in *THE NEW BEACON*.

* * *

The many friends of DR. ERNEST WHITFIELD, who went with his family to the South of France at the beginning of the War, will be glad to hear that he has made the passage to the United States by Clipper from Lisbon, and is now at Kingston, Ontario, Canada, with family complete.

A PLUCKY DWELLER IN NO MAN'S LAND

JAMES lives in that difficult borderland between the kingdom of the sighted and the blind. He did go for a period to a blind school, but left as partially sighted, though his sight is very bad.

The sea had always made a strong appeal, and he set off in a tramp steamer and presently went as ship's cook in a fishing trawler. I am afraid his messes were not very palatable, and he was airily soon dismissed. Later on, while still at sea, he tumbled over a capstan and was laid up for a long time with injuries to his inside.

Afterwards, until he was 18 or so, he did compassionate work as a gardener's boy, but the lady could not afford to keep him on when he needed a man's wage.

A month before war broke out he determined to serve his country somehow. At the blind school he had been a Patrol Leader of the Scouts, and had given a good account of himself. What follows proves the mettle of the lad.

First of all he travelled 50 miles to a neighbouring town and tried to enlist. Of course he was turned down because of his bad eyesight. Nothing daunted, he applied in turn to the Air Force and to the Navy, only to be again rejected. One Sunday morning he told his mother in triumph that he was going to join a mine-sweeper, and that he had already applied to the Customs Office for the purpose. Remembering his recent rebuffs, his mother was incredulous, but sure enough he turned up that same evening in full service kit.

He has been at sea and kept his job ever since, and has been for many months now a fully-fledged A.B. His mother says that his sight has actually improved, as he can now read a bit without holding the print within six inches of his eyes. The doctor always advised him to work in the open air.

I wonder what James will do when the war is over. He will certainly deserve a helping hand.

BORDERLINE.

THE WAR-BLINDED AND UNIFIED BLIND WELFARE

THE scheme prepared in Scotland for war-blinded civilians was briefly noticed in the March number of THE NEW BEACON. It was prepared by a Committee representing the Scottish National Federation for the Welfare of the Blind, the Scottish Association of Home Teachers and the Scottish Branch of the College of Teachers of the Blind, and it sets out what should be done and how it should be done with admirable Scottish practicality. The scheme is in fact parallel in all its details to that prepared by the National Institute for the Blind announced last year, but it is noticeable for the clear expression of the principle that a scheme for war-time provision must provide "for the utilisation, on behalf of the civilian war blind, of the welfare services already available for the blind under the existing arrangements of Local Authorities and Voluntary Agencies."

It is noticeable, also, for its omission of residential re-training Centres on the lines of St. Dunstan's and of the Homes of Recovery now established in England for the rehabilitation of civilian adults. In England it has been thought essential to provide residential accommodation for the difficult and decisive months which follow medical treatment in hospital. In Scotland it appears to be thought that all that is required can be given to newly blinded people in their own homes. In sharp distinction from this view is that expressed in a recent issue of the *Public Assistance Journal* (a magazine which is always extremely well-informed on matters of blind welfare) that Homes of Recovery are an "obvious necessity as a war-time addition to the machinery of the organisation for the welfare of the blind" and that they "may have a more permanent value; and if possible they should be fitted into the structure of the service after the War."

The Scottish scheme, like that for England and Wales, provides for all civilians blinded in the War, "special provision being made elsewhere for members of H.M. Forces, regular Police Officers, and professional Firemen." Its announcement at the present time serves to emphasise the ability of the system of blind welfare now established in all parts of Great Britain to provide for all contingencies arising from war-inflicted blindness. In Scotland, as in England and Wales, it has been agreed that members of the fighting services should be taken out of the direct responsibility of Local Authorities and Local Agencies for the Blind. This exception is not due to any incapacity on the part of Local Agencies and Authorities to meet the needs and to provide for the futures of blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen: it is due to the fact that special machinery for their aftercare was created in the last War, when there was no universal system of blind welfare, no registration and no definite allocation of responsibility for visitation, supervision, home teaching, training and employment. It may be fairly said that, if this special machinery had not been created in the last War, no one would have dreamt of inventing it for the requirements of the present situation.

Comparisons are proverbially odious. It is wiser to avoid the occasion for them than to try to ignore them when they arise from questionable distinctions. In this War we are all in the front line—all, military or civilian, are exposed to similar risks. The Government have properly, and indeed inevitably in our democratic community, provided pensions and compensation for civilians injured and affected by acts of the enemy. No country has ever planned to provide, so comprehensively and on such generous terms, for all members of the community disabled by war injury, for their dependants and for the dependants of persons killed in the War.

Our concern is for those who suffer blindness and we can express appreciation on their behalf to the Government. To all intents and purposes, civilians blinded in this War will be pensioned in the same way as members of the fighting forces blinded in this War or the last. But Blind Welfare means much more than assurance of income. It means ensuring to the blind their proper place in society as self-supporting citizens wherever possible, as self-respecting citizens at all events. For the blinded of this War it means bringing them into the main stream of blind welfare work so that they may receive its benefits and make their particular contribution to its success. That, briefly, is the principle laid down both in England and Scotland. Every resource of existing blind welfare must be utilised for war-blinded civilians; and—we would add—if the present emergency proves a deficiency in any particular and in any place, it must be made good, for there is no essential distinction between the needs of the newly blinded and the needs of those who had previously entered the ranks of the blind or will enter them in future.

It is beyond question impossible to make a just distinction between one category of blind people and another. That is evident. Moreover it seems likely that public opinion will not tolerate any glaring discrepancy between the provision made for those who are blinded and for other people disabled by enemy action in this War. As the commitments entered into in this War are incomparably greater than those resulting from the last, so inquiry into the cost of providing for its consequences will be keener and more searching. Immense burdens will have to be borne—for loans and for repayments, for dependants of the dead and for the care of the handicapped living—and we, who conduct social services on charitable contributions which come out of the same pockets as rates and taxes, will have to justify our work, more clearly than ever before, by proved efficiency and evident economy. Unified blind welfare, retaining its voluntary character on the one hand and co-operating whole-heartedly on the other with the Local Authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities, will be put to its biggest test, and will be given its greatest opportunity.

We should be better prepared for that test if it had been possible to bring all the blinded of this War into the general system of blind welfare. That policy, however, was not approved. Instead, it was laid down that members of the fighting forces should be cared for by St. Dunstan's, and civilians by the Local Agencies for the Blind, with the National Institute as a centralising body providing Homes of Recovery and any other services which Local Agencies severally could not provide. That means, unfortunately, the continued existence side by side of two systems of training, after-care and employment. Unfortunately, also, the discrepancy in cost between the two systems is extreme. On the basis of the latest figures available, civilian blind people cost the country approximately £40 per head (£33 from public sources and £7 from voluntary funds) and St. Dunstaners £246 per head (£136 from public funds and £110 from voluntary). So long as the number of St. Dunstaners is small and strictly limited to members of the fighting forces, public criticism, judging by past experience, is not likely to be severe. But it is obviously necessary for those who are responsible for blind welfare to perfect their arrangements over the whole field, providing for the war-blinded as well as the blind in general with the comparative economy which has characterised their work in the past and with ever greater efficiency.

THE EDITOR.

MOON IN AMERICA

The following extracts are taken from a paper on the beginnings of Home Teaching in Philadelphia, recently read at an American Home Teachers' Conference by Dr. Edward Allen. We reprint it from the "Outlook for the Blind."

HOME TEACHING and Moon type were the twin children of a young divinity student named William Moon who said in later life: "God gave me blindness as a talent to be used for His glory. Without blindness I should never have been able to see the needs of the blind." It is of his mission in America, how it began in Philadelphia, and how it grew there that I would tell you to-day.

Home teaching in the United States was but eight years young when I, who had hardly left boyhood behind, took charge of the Philadelphia institution, fifty years ago this month. I mention these facts both because of regret at not having met Dr. Moon, who died in 1894—for he had long been one of my heroes of the darkness—and because the Philadelphia school had been instrumental in starting our American pioneer home teaching society.

My predecessor there told me, I think, that in the summer of 1881 he had visited Dr. Moon at his printing-house in Brighton, England, for advice as how to get the adult pupils of the Pennsylvania Institution to finger-read; and

that, as a result, material in Moon type was sent across which some thirty of them learned to read within a single week, to be followed up by Dr. Moon himself as guest of the then Principal. He had come there expressly to introduce his type and home teaching into this country. Meetings of influential and philanthropic citizens were immediately called, and the Philadelphia Home Teaching Society was launched. This was in 1882.

Back in my London days I had seen Moon type put to a very different kind of use—the sidewalk reading aloud by blind men for pennies. Whenever these sitters heard footsteps approaching, their fingers began to sweep the books and their voices to repeat Scripture.

Probably some of you home teachers have handled the latest Braille pamphlets from England—those whose sheets are loosely but well held together by modern spiral wire binding. The Moon books have always been made to lie open across the laps of their readers, the convenient and comfortable way, since a lap is one's own and always available, an important matter

in small crowded homes. Their other inducements for continued reading with a minimum of fatigue and impatience are the few long lines on the page rather than the many short ones of the Braille books made for desk reading; also the embossing according to the return-line principle, which alike saves muscular movement, helps keep the place, and alternates the reading sides of the finger, thus delaying numbness. Then, too, there are no perplexing contractions to be met with, so keeping the reading a pleasure rather than a task. I fancy the Moon books were made light, many of them in pamphlet form, because in the old days the home teachers and guides carried them between library and readers; also between pupil and pupil.

William Moon's son, Dr. Robert Moon, ophthalmologist, came in the 1880's to live and to practise in Philadelphia. He became secretary of the little society and likewise helped along its growth and usefulness.

About the turn of the century, which was epochal in its general interest in the welfare of the adult blind, the Philadelphia Home Teaching Society's available shelf-room in the Bible Society's library having become overcrowded with the accessioning of Moon books, and swamped with their near and far circulation, it was arranged to have the Philadelphia Free Library open a department of embossed books and not only house but also circulate them. The Moon books were still mostly of a religious nature, though relieved by some biography, history, travel, poetry, and an occasional bit of fiction.

Philadelphia, the original American centre for Moon books, remained the centre for their yearly enrichment in stories, also for their importation; it may still be so. Anyway the United States quickly became the chief market for these books. Their circulation here increased by leaps and bounds; indeed, for years it far exceeded that of the four other embossed systems combined, including those in the point types taught in the schools. Thus you see that the relationship in the United States between home teaching and Moon type was and is alike, close and intimate. May it long continue to be so.

So much for our home teaching pioneering as begun in 1882. Forty-two years later, in 1924, Principal Burritt had his school at Overbrook pioneer towards lifting this important social service to the dignity of a profession; and he did this by opening there a two-year course in the training of home teachers. Philadelphia claims that home teaching is potentially one of the very best means of service to the adults newly blinded, and that it should be made the most of.

Since writing this brief sketch I have received a letter from Miss Goldthwaite, for many years

librarian of embossed books in the New York Public Library. She writes:

As you know, the Moon Society, 104 Queen's Road, Brighton, is the only source of Moon publications in the world, except the press of the Braille Institute which has added exactly twelve titles to the world's supply of Moon books, and the Ziegler Press which gets out only its magazine, so I think a word or two about the conditions under which the work at Brighton is being carried on amidst the nuisance of air raids might add a touch of interest to your address.

I have recently received a letter from Mr. Eagar, Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind, London. He writes under date of July 22 that "Inasmuch as Brighton is on the coast it is in a sense in the front line, but, even if serious attempts are made on that seaside town, I have every reason to believe that the staff will continue at work without much regard for their personal safety and completely confident in the issue of the War. Only under a direct order to evacuate will we suspend our work or reduce our programme of production. No such order is at present anticipated."

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Blindness from Air Raids.

This pamphlet, published by the National Institute for the Blind (price 1d., 2d. post free) contains a statement of the principles to be followed in Homes of Recovery designed to enable persons blinded in raids to recover confidence and a place in society. It shows how, when hospital treatment is completed, there is still something to be done before the injured person is ready for professional or industrial training, and how in the Homes of Recovery he is helped to readjust himself to the new conditions of living imposed by his handicap of blindness. Training begins from the moment of admission to the Home and goes on throughout the waking day, formal teaching of Braille and handicrafts, open air exercise and games, indoor recreation, massage and remedial exercises all having their part to play. The Home, if its work is satisfactorily completed, should enable the blind man or woman to leave the sheltered life it provides ready to face the future with cheerfulness, courage and confidence.

Oldham Workshops for the Blind.

The article by Mr. Ben Purse on these workshops has occasioned such a demand for the Workshops' Annual Report for 1940, that copies have run out. Mr. C. A. Coward, Superintendent, will, however, be glad to send copies of the Report for the current year, when completed, to any of the Institutions for the Blind who apply to him.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Standard English Braille.

SIR,—Parts of the letter from Mr. R. M. Halder, in your April issue, on the rules and practice of Standard English Braille, are not easy to follow; but as far as I understand the writer, I am in entire agreement with him about the capital sign. I offer the following comments:

1. It is literally true that no blind person using English Braille gets the education in capitals that every seeing child can have automatically. This must be important to typists, though of course I have no direct experience here. But as a reader and proof reader I find, after many years, that I cannot always answer the simple question "Should there be a capital here?"

2. The incompleteness of the agreement with America is shown up when we find ourselves differing in every magazine and book we print on such a simple and yet fundamental point. The problem for a teacher in a distant part of the Empire, who gets a considerable portion of his school literature from America, is new to me; and I can understand that sometimes it must be acute. I do not suggest that this is a reason for a change of practice or principle, but I do suggest that the amount of Braille traffic between the Empire and America should be ascertained by English braillists: also that it is a further reason for seeking a more complete agreement.

3. The objections to the use of the capital sign have been generally (a) that it makes a needless extra sign to read; (b) that it wastes space.

(a) Since the revision I have read many American magazines, and I now find that I pass over the capitals quickly almost without noticing them, except where their occurrence brings me some interest.

(b) Where the rule is to start each paragraph on a new line, there are literally thousands of paragraphs where the use of capitals could make no difference to space.

With these objections cleared away, the education and business support for the use of capitals becomes even stronger than it was in itself.

4. Another reason for using the capital is our sacrifice to America of the old Braille distinction between the abbreviation dot and the full stop. Where all dots are stops, and where no stop is followed by a capital letter, reading is not always as easy as it might be. The fact that we have

had to arrange to leave two spaces in cases where it can be doubtful whether a stop is for an abbreviation or for the end of a sentence shows the way to this argument.

5. Mr. Halder seems never to have understood that the rules for using capitals were always regarded here as optional. Braille authorities, apparently in agreement with the majority of Braille readers in Britain, decided from the first to declare against this option. In deciding not to use capitals, we are not therefore scouting our own decisions: we are merely exercising a right we always reserved to ourselves.

My position, then, is this: that I personally agree with Mr. Halder, but that I cannot see any ground of complaint against the official practice of English Braille.

J. DUGDALE.

Bournemouth.

To the Editor.

SIR,—The value of using one Braille system throughout the whole English-speaking world is immense, for the more subconscious the act of reading becomes, the more attention can be paid to the subject. When, in 1931, our American friends sent a deputation of experts to compare Braille reading in Britain, where practically the same system had been in use for sixty years, with the reading of the blind in America, who had been subjected to major experiments in finger-typography, they found the British led easily both in speed and accuracy.

The full use of the capital sign was left optional in Standard English Braille because British readers felt that besides reducing the contents of their periodicals by some two or three per cent. and lengthening the finger-journey in all books, the number of extra signs would interrupt the spontaneity of their reading. It is surprising how seldom the lack of capitalisation causes ambiguity when the preceding context is known, although cases do occur, as in the words "Word" and "Light" in the opening verses of St. John's Gospel, while in Robert Burns' famous song the printing of "rye" with a small "r" in some editions and the capital in others gave rise to a controversy as to whether a field of corn or a local burn was referred to.

Whether a blind writer would learn to capitalise normally and up to examination standards by simply reading books in which capitals are shown, I do not know. The style

of authors or their printers varies except in main principles. Children's books sometimes exhibit a far greater number of capital letters than one would find in ordinary literature, and would not American books used to show capitalisation also inculcate Transatlantic spelling? Surely all blind school children should be taught handwriting or typing very carefully, to provide them with lifelong contact with the seeing.

But the indication of capitals in Braille books without too much addition to their size and interference with the flow of the reading would be of great service, especially to those who wish to quote from them correctly and cannot refer to a letterpress copy. Could we not devise a simple set of rules for minimum capitalisation and get transcribers to insert the capital sign when the capital would not be implied by them and wherever there is a chance of ambiguity? I myself often mark unexpected capitals when taking down passages I want from dictation. It would impose some extra trouble on the transcriber, but it would bring our books much nearer perfection.

Yours, etc.,

W. PERCY MERRICK.

To the Editor.

"Blind World."

SIR,—Your editorial in *THE NEW BEACON* for January, 1941, must have been welcomed by many blind people, for it raises a subject which is much in need of full and free discussion. As one of the critics of the phrase "Blind World," I beg to state my case.

You raise, I think, two distinct questions, the first concerning a phrase which you regard as convenient and harmless and which I condemn as inaccurate. What do we mean by this phrase "Blind World"? Do we mean all blind people throughout the world, "from China to Peru"? That is what we say; but for my part I doubt whether there is anybody with knowledge wide enough to qualify him to speak of "The Blind World" in this strict sense.

You do not think that the phrase suggests "a herding together"; whether or not this is true, judging from my own experience I know that the general public cherishes such a conception. One blind person is musical, they must all be musical; another is an expert knitter, they must all be good knitters and enjoy it; some receive an allowance from the local authority, they must all be in receipt of such an allowance; there are those who are even offended if one tries to explain that so far from receiving any financial assistance, a substantial number of blind persons pay income-tax at precisely the same rate as their seeing fellows. Worst of all,

the term "Blind World" tends to give colour to the supposition that the blind community can achieve self-sufficiency in the sense of giving employment to all its members, whereas we cannot emphasise too strongly the fact that it can prosper only through its relations with other communities. It seems to me that the diversity of gifts and interests among the blind is badly in need of emphasis.

This tendency of ours to split up the world into a great many smaller "worlds" seems to me to spring from a fundamental misconception that lies at the root of many of our present troubles; properly speaking, there are only two worlds, this world and the next. St. Thomas More said "a man may live for the next world and yet be merry," but I have been counting up, trying to discover to how many worlds I belong; when I reached half-a-dozen I sighed and said: "I cannot possibly be merry if I have to live in six worlds at once"; and I stopped counting forthwith. Sometimes when friends meet in an unexpected place they say: "Well, it's a small world after all!" How preposterous! To be glad because the world is small! We sometimes congratulate ourselves that it is getting smaller because we can get round it much faster than our ancestors and because Adolf Hitler can shout from one end of it to the other when he wants to, but aeroplanes and the radio do not make the world smaller; they could and should make it seem bigger and more interesting. But here we are trying to make for ourselves little worlds in which we can settle down and be comfortable—English-speaking worlds or Germanic worlds—and all we succeed in making is wars. The process breaks down, and the result is a ruthless individualism or a merciless totalitarianism. Let us, then, try to remember that the world is a very big place.

Mr. Martin, in his excellent letter, instinctively uses the phrase "Blind Community" although he does not explicitly criticise the term "Blind World." It is the phrase which I should suggest as the most accurate expression of our meaning; if anyone can think of a better, let him give us the benefit of his opinion. "Blind Community" has the great advantage that we can qualify it as, for example, "the Blind Community in this country"; we cannot qualify "Blind World" in this way. It may be objected that this is an unnecessary fuss about a mere word, but is it? Loose thinking leads to loose speaking, and loose speaking to more loose thinking. We have seen in our day how mere catchwords can set whole nations ablaze. For the love of truth and liberty, let us learn to think clearly and to express our thoughts accurately.

Your second question has already been answered by Mr. Martin; the answer is not pleasant, but I am afraid that it is true. I can do little more than give a few examples from my own experience. Do not, however, fall into the error of confining your conception of welfare work to what is official; for much that is done no statistics are or could be available. My blind friends have helped me in many ways, and I have perhaps been able to help them; many seeing people, too, like to work for the blind in this private and personal manner. Much excellent work is done unobtrusively, almost one might say incidentally, and I suspect that for a good deal of it the critics of the phrase "Blind World" are themselves responsible. Then, too, I think, blind people need not feel themselves under an obligation to take up welfare work for the blind. Maurice de la Sizeranne, a shining example of a man who gave his life to this work, would, I feel sure, have agreed with me in saying that it is a vocation; if a man has not that vocation, the best thing he can do is to leave the work to those who have; this applies to the seeing equally with the blind; would that it were more fully realised. Some blind men and women have so long and hard a struggle to make their way in the world that they have little time or energy left to help their fellows; others have only a small private income, not sufficient to enable them to devote their whole time to work for the blind which generally involves a certain amount of expense. If they could obtain even part-time employment they might willingly give the rest of their time and some of their income to voluntary work. But employment is precisely what the blind of the class to which you refer cannot get.

The truth was first brought home to me when, as a student teacher in a school for the blind, I heard a class of rather backward children being told by their headmaster that their examination marks were all that were to be desired, neither too high nor too low; they were better not to be too high because all the troubles in the world to-day, all the revolutions, were caused by people who got good degrees at the University and thought they should therefore get good jobs. I saw that in this sphere under existing conditions my qualifications were in truth disqualifications. Disillusionment is a very necessary experience, albeit a painful one. Later I wrote, on advice, to a school for the blind asking if they had a vacancy on their teaching staff. In reply I received a postcard which read: "The answer is in the negative, namely no." I felt very much inclined to offer the management a course in English—free. At all events they have provided us with a splendid family joke. My grandfather had been in the habit of contributing to this

Institution, and shortly after his death an appeal for funds was re-directed to me. I wrote asking how many blind teachers were employed by the school, and whether uncertificated teachers were still employed. The reply informed me at some length that the school staff (excluding music) was a hundred per cent. seeing, and fifty per cent. uncertificated. The syntax broke down completely under the stress of a fruitless effort to explain such a situation. I replied that under these circumstances I could not consider continuing my grandfather's subscription; it is, in my opinion, no charity to give money to an institution which is acting neither justly nor charitably. One member of a committee, on being asked why he opposed the employment of blind teachers, asserted that it was because the children in schools for the blind were "half asleep"; a child who had ever suffered from weak eyes could have explained the offending phenomenon, but the learned gentleman did not trouble to inquire; it never struck him that there might be an explanation other than the inefficiency of the teacher. He was simply taking the headmaster's view, and finding the easiest excuse for it; there was no more to be said. The good Nazi would understand perfectly. If our institutions and societies for the blind will not employ highly-trained blind people, is it likely that they will want them on their committees? Their presence is as undesirable as an unexploded bomb.

When I was a little girl at my first school, the members of our committee were much addicted to speech-making. This was rather trying for us, but it helped to develop in me a keen critical faculty, and often occasioned some unseemly mirth. I remember one gentleman who announced triumphantly: "This is not a charitable institution; this is a high-class boarding-school." I thought it very funny indeed; I still think it rather funny, but even more tragic. I quite agree with the first part of his statement, but what there is to be pleased about I cannot imagine. Perhaps the poor man had never read St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. For my own part I most fervently desire to see the principles of justice and charity restored to their rightful place in a Christian civilisation, and I look forward to a day when all our institutions will again earn and bear proudly the honourable name of charitable. If by sitting on a committee or by any other activity I can help to bring this about, I shall work with all my might.

You, Sir, find it difficult to realise the problems which the highly-trained blind worker must face because you are among those whose attitude is in sharp contrast to the present trend of opinion.

If anything that I have written in these pages has been of the slightest assistance to my blind fellows, it is due not only to my efforts but to your co-operation ; in the midst of so much that is discouraging, the friendly welcome with which you have always met my articles has been to me a recurring source of encouragement and a fresh ground for hope. I gladly take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation and of offering my most sincere thanks.

Yours, etc.,

ELIZABETH W. WHITEHEAD.

Edinburgh.

To the Editor.

Some Suggested Developments.

SIR,—It is splendid that you should spare space in your valuable and contracted columns for suggestions such as those made by Mr. Driver. There must be numbers of us blind who are like Private Willis—"to chase monotony, we exercises of our brains, that is, supposing that we've got any." And the result is that we think of things that would astonish you !

You, Sir, already have the Braille Encyclopædia suggestion in hand. May I now carry the Talking Book idea a step farther? Mr. Driver's dream of a Talking Book receiving set in every school for the blind will not only come true in time but will extend until every intelligent blind person possesses one. This, however, is only one side of my dream. What of the recording sets? In 1938 I visited some eight or nine separate firms in London who were producing recording sets, but the lowest price was then £50, and of course the disc records were of the ordinary five-minute kinds for music or talks. Since then the strides in sound recording have been tremendous, as the B.B.C. proves daily, and so it scarcely needs brains to foretell that, after the war, sound recording will have been improved, revolutionised and cheapened beyond the wildest dreams of a few years ago. Tape or ribbon recording will doubtless entirely supersede the present disc and, if it may not be possible to place the voice record of a three-volume novel inside a buttercup, we shall certainly get it into the waistcoat pocket. I think it was Bret Harte who asked: "Do I sleep, do I dream, or is visions about?" Let us remember that the camera and the radio set and telephone, like every new invention, began as toys or as the costly possessions of the wealthy, but look at them now! The time will come when not indeed only the blind but the sighted may have their own sound recording set. Just think of the boon to a blind student. Instead of some friend having to read over and over books not readily available in Braille, they will be read once

into the home recorder and the student can play them back as often as desired.

But I hear some one exclaim: "This fellow is mad! What will the gramophone companies have to say about it? Are they going to see their vested interests blown to smithereens? Think of the millions of disc records and, for that matter, Talking Book records thrown on the scrap heap." Vested interests! What drags have these ever been on progress! Doubtless similar cries of horror were raised at every new invention since Adam.

Meantime let us thank and be grateful to those on both sides of the Atlantic who have produced and so far perfected the Talking Book. It is the finest invention for the benefit of the blind since Louis Braille's time. The readers are grand and the whole organisation as perfect as seems humanly possible.

Yours, etc.,

"X."

To the Editor.

Table Manners and the Blind.

SIR,—I feel very strongly that a great deal more attention should be paid, in schools and colleges for the blind, to the very important matter of table manners, and perhaps through the medium of your magazine this might be brought to the notice of those responsible for the training of young blind persons. Many of those I have seen are not in the least normal in this respect, though in others they may be extremely well educated and up to date. The holding of knives, forks and spoons is often not only incorrect but most awkward, and does not help them to convey food to the mouth in the easiest way.

One blind college student of my acquaintance confesses that it is a waste of time to take soup, and he is evidently quite unaware that he tilts his spoon backwards each time and loses half of it. Similarly he is unaware that his fork should not be used as a shovel, and he has no idea how to cut anything, but pulls food with his fork away from his knife. A blind girl I know always uses the tip of her spoon and does not cut a pudding with the side of it as sighted people do; she also gets very little liquid as the bowl of the spoon seldom reaches the plate.

These and such-like deficiencies in table manners prevent the very normality which blind persons always desire, and must be due very largely to lack of attention and patience in early training. Apparently meals in schools and colleges are hurried affairs so it would seem that special classes are needed in order to bring blind persons more into line with their sighted fellows.

Yours, etc.,

New Southgate.

(Miss) G. W. LEWIS.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

Essex County Association for the Blind.—The Annual Report shows how the war has affected the year's work; by involving the blind in evacuation schemes, which affected those living in danger areas, both on the coast and in large towns; by making at once more difficult and more necessary the work of local Societies and Social Clubs; and by drawing the blind within the orbit of those helping in the war effort. In this connection, hundreds of knitted garments have been made for the Forces with wool supplied by the Essex Comforts Fund and Chelmsford Depot of the Missions to Seamen, and there has been great activity also in gardens and allotments—"many of the blind living in these parts have their small plots and gardens, and with some help and assistance in the way of seeds, tools and advice, we hope this year to extend our plans."

National Deaf-Blind Helpers' League, 1939-40.—The League now has a membership of 700 deaf-blind persons and 460 associates, who, through the Holiday Home at Hoylake, the Christmas Gift Appeal, the "Braille Rainbow" and "Moon Rainbow," and occasional social gatherings, are helped to lead fuller and happier lives. The war has made the work of the League more difficult, as many of its members have been evacuated, and transport difficulties have made Group meetings harder to arrange; but the Report recognises that the members of the League need its message of cheerfulness even more than in ordinary times, and every effort is made to keep in touch with the deaf-blind through correspondence when personal contacts are not possible. Holidays have been arranged for as many members as possible, Braille watches have been supplied, special grants have been made in times of sickness and other emergencies, and very simple hearing-aids have been supplied.

Empire.

School for the Blind, Kunnampulam.—Any new venture for the welfare of the blind in India deserves a warm welcome, and the Report of the above school, which is the only one providing education for the blind population of Cochin China, Travancore, British Malabar and South Canara, shows that a promising beginning

has been made. The school began in 1934 with a single pupil "in a spirit of adventure and faith." Its first teacher, Christian Kallingal, who was trained at the Schools for the Blind, Palamcottah, unhappily died not long after he had begun his work, and has been succeeded by Mr. K. Pavu. There is no restriction of administration based upon caste, and the children, who come from poor homes, are given free education and maintenance. The school receives Government recognition and aid. Some attractive photographs illustrate the Report, including one of the children in the costumes of a musical play. One of the teachers has received training at a School for Rural Reconstruction, and it is hoped that when the children leave school some of them may find useful employment as bee-keepers and poultry farmers in their own villages.

Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, Melbourne.—The 73rd Annual Report for 1939-40 shows that in spite of the needs of war charities and increased taxation, the Institute has carried on its work for the blind with unremitting energy, and sales for the year reached a record total of over £52,600.

In the school, the District Inspector's report shows that the education given is on modern lines, and makes use of the aids that science can give; gramophone records of Shakespeare plays, educational broadcasts, development of hand training, the use of models, visits to museums, all contribute towards enabling the education given to reach what the Inspector calls "surprisingly high" standards. Musical successes of the year include another Bachelor of Music to add to the ranks of ex-pupils who have made good, and the placing of one pupil in the second place on the University Class list for his first year's work towards the Diploma of Music, with honours in seven subjects.

Foreign.

National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, New York.—The Report for 1940 has as its frontispiece a photograph of Dr. Park Lewis, its former Vice-President, "a friend of humanity" who spent his working life in the interests of prevention. Among the main activities of the year dealt with in the Report are the following: The establishment of a special committee, medical and lay, to deal with glaucoma and to press for early treatment of this disease; a conference with leading ophthalmologists from Central and South America; the publication of a manual on the use of the Classification of Causes of Blindness (this in collaboration with the American Foundation) and much educational

activity by means of lectures, broadcasting, films. The Report refers to the "tragic halt" of the activities of the International Association for Prevention of Blindness which is one of the results of war, and stresses the importance of eyesight as "vital to national service."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices given are net prices and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production. They are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dances:		s.	d.
18233	Carr, M., and Day, D. Yesterday's Dreams, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18258	Noel, A., and Pelosi, D. Down ev'ry Street, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18259	Schwartz, A. Something to Remember You by, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18260	White, J. Say that You Care for Me, <i>Song-Waltz</i>	0	6
18345	Churchill, S., and Oliver, V. I Give You my Heart, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18346	Hunter, R., and Charles, C. The King is Still in London, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18348	Sherwin, M. The Little Boy who Never Told a Lie, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18347	Wallace, R. All the Best, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6

Military March:

18143	Nowowieski, F. Under Freedom's Flag	0	6
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MOON BOOKS.

4416-20	Along the Indian Road, by S. Jones. 5 vols. (Limited Edition.)	5	vols.
4421-5	Dead Ned, by J. Masefield. 5 vols. (Limited Edition.)	5	vols.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Biography:		Vols.
Chamberlain, Joseph, by W. F. Petrie	1	
Scott, Captain, by Stephen Gwynn	3	
English Literature:		
Arnold, Matthew. Culture and Anarchy	4	
Pritchard, F. H. Essentials of Modern English	5	
History:		
Hall, John. England and the Orleans Monarchy	7	
Law:		
Dicey, A. V. Law of the Constitution. ed. Wade, 1931	12	
Miscellaneous:		
Cromer, Ruby. Such were these Years	4	
Gorki, Maxim. Fragments from my Diary	4	
Lindsay, Martin. Those Greenland Days. (British Arctic Air-route Expedition, 1930-31)		
Morton, H. V. In Search of Scotland	5	
Storrs, Ronald. Lawrence of Arabia, Zionism and Palestine	2	
Werth, Alexander. Last Days of Paris	3	
Poetry and Drama:		
Bridie, James. Tobias and the Angel	2	
Sayers, Dorothy L. Zeal of Thy House	1	
Political:		
Beals, Carlton. Coming Struggle for Latin America	6	
East, Gordon. Mediterranean Problems	2	

	Vols.
Fischer, Louis. Stalin and Hitler	1
Lindsay, A. D. I believe in Democracy (Broadcast Talks)	1

Theology and Religions:

Hadham, John. God in a World at War	2
Weatherhead, Leslie D. This is the Victory	3

MANUSCRIPT MUSIC LIBRARY.

Piano:

Beethoven. Thirty-three Variations on a Valse of Diabelli (563).	
--	--

Piano and Orchestra:

Saint-Saëns. 2nd Concerto in G minor. Piano Solo (564). Orchestral Part (565).	
Chopin. Grand Concerto in E minor, Op. 11. Piano Solo (566). Orchestral Part (567).	

BRAILLE PANDA BINDING.

The National Institute regrets that, owing to the destruction by enemy action of the factory where "Pandas" are bound, a less satisfactory binding has had to be adopted for the time being. It hopes, however, to be able to resume the "Spirax" binding within the next three months, and meanwhile asks the indulgence of readers for the change in binding and any consequent delay in delivery that may occur.

"WHAT TO DO ABOUT GAS."

This leaflet, issued by the Ministry of Home Security, has been published in Braille by the National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, W. 1. It was issued as a Supplement to the *National Braille Mail*, but single copies can be obtained, free of charge, by any blind person on application to the Institute.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

30th April, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	7
(Four applications under consideration)	
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea	—
(Applications from blind persons and their guides for periods of rest can now be received)	
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring	6
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay	—
(Applications for admission can now be received)	

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

TO BRAILLE ENTHUSIASTS.

Become word perfect. Equip yourself with notes clarifying the rules relating to lower sign contractions (Grade II). Apply for particulars to H. N. Vickerstaff (as above). enclosing stamp.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind:
Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

CHESTER AND DISTRICT BLIND WELFARE SOCIETY.

Industrial Manager (male) required to take charge of Workshops, Home Workers, Trading Accounts, Sales, etc. Salary £350 per annum, plus War Bonus.

Secretary (female) required to superintend all Home Teaching services in urban and rural areas. Possession of car essential. Salary £300 per annum, plus War Bonus.

Applications for the above appointments should be made in writing before the 31st May, 1941, to The Chairman, Chester and District Blind Welfare Society, 13a, Lower Bridge Street, Chester.

SIGHTED HOME TEACHER (FEMALE)

Required, single and over 21 years of age, either:

(1) Holding the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Salary £156 per annum, rising to £200, or

(2) Probationer, at a salary of £104 per annum, who will be expected to obtain the College of Teachers' Certificate within two years of date of appointment, and upon qualifying may be accepted as a Home Teacher and receive a salary according to Society's Scale. Work entails visiting, pastime occupations and welfare of blind people, etc. Applications, stating age, education and qualifications, together with copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the undersigned not later than 31st May, 1941. R. J. Smith, Secretary, Home Teaching Society for the Blind in Newcastle and Gateshead, The Sutherland Memorial Hall, Jesmond Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING.

Blind Persons Act, 1920.

APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER AND SUPERVISOR.

Applications are invited for the post of female (sighted) Home Teacher and Visitor of blind persons and supervisor of the blind home workers in Reading, at a salary at the rate of £183 per annum, rising, subject to satisfactory service, by annual increments of £13 to £209 per annum (the maximum salary of the post), together with a cost of living bonus awarded by the Council amounting to 5s. per week.

Applicants must have some knowledge of handicrafts suitable for blind persons, of the home workers' trades and of Braille, as well as an ability to teach. The person appointed will be responsible for obtaining orders from firms and private individuals and for examining the work done by the workers.

The person selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to her inclusion in the superannuation scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, experience, qualifications, and date when services would be available, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, must be delivered to me endorsed "Home Teacher and Supervisor," not later than Saturday, 31st instant.

C. S. JOHNSON, Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Reading.

9th May, 1941.

WANTED: COPIES OF LETTERPRESS BOOKS ON BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, offers the original price of 2s. 6d. each for clean copies of the letterpress editions of *Key to the Braille Music Notation*, 1922 (Catalogue No. 6673) and *Elementary Lessons and Exercises in the Revised (1922) Braille Music Notation*, by Watson (Catalogue No. 7351).



By kind permission of the Evening Standard Co., Ltd., and Mr. David Low.

BRAILLE PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 42.—Journey into Fear, by Eric Ambler. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

A novel of suspense. The time is now. The traveller is a British engineer returning home from a business trip to Istanbul comfortably aware of his own security, till he finds that civilisation is a word and that he still lives in a jungle. The author is to the thriller what Dorothy Sayers is to the detective story, that is, he is a serious artist.

No. 43.—With the Foreign Legion at Narvik, by Capitaine Pierre O. Lapie. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

A thrilling and personal account of a little-known but brilliantly successful expedition which captured the heights round Narvik and drove the Germans towards the Swedish frontier. The Legion lives fully up to its magnificent traditions in a happy liaison with the Royal Navy and the Polish Legion.

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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INTO THE COVERING NIGHT

By HOMET

I HAVE just been groping through my makeshift Braille dictionary for a HOMET as any part of speech, but couldn't find the *him*, *her* or *it* of the strange word. A sighted friend carried on the quest through the corpulent and conceited pages of a couple of our most learned lexicons with like result; so, sweet readers, don't go straining your eyes and fuddling your brains in attempts to deduce some ancient or classical derivation as its ancestor, for this is its first appearance in print—in the beam of THE NEW BEACON.

In the early days of our Blind Welfare Council in this city "Half as old as time" (with apologies to "A rose red city" somewhere down Africa way), a pioneering lady, wishing to make it known that a certain press in the office was reserved for the Home Teachers, commenced to inscribe largely and blackly upon its door, HOME T. At the "T" she was imperatively summoned away. So with that rudely interrupted christening ceremony, where the cheap deal door was register, we home teachers were conveniently abbreviated. The officiating priestess on that occasion may perchance read this; if so, we would like her to be assured of our reverential respects.

As a respite from the bombs and their blasted misery, may we invite some of you, our fellow HOMETS, to make a round of visits with us to the old dwelling places of the blind that have so far not been disturbed by high explosive or incendiary? We will walk through dim streets lined with cliffs of black houses, and down the many mazy lanes, courts and alleys with which two thousand years have veined this city.

This ravine of an old thoroughfare we have reached, with its name that princes have been titled with away up through history, is all a-squeal with children, who have never been taught that it is vulgar to play and squabble through the exuberance of their growing years out here in public on the worn cobbles and deep-kerbed pavements. In the far days when the houses were built, each was possessed or rented by members of the aristocracy. Did any of those patrician folk ever visualise this future of ragged din and joyful squalor supplanting the refined decorum of the sedan chairs and carriages?

Nowadays a hamlet or village of families occupies each house. Some of our blind friends are living in them. A few were born there and lived their frugal, hard-working lives to well

past the allotted span before age limed their eyes to blindness. Others who came to dwell there have lost their sight through neglected trachoma or other eye assailants years before they have reached pension age.

We go into Number —, up the six steps that have known no hearth-stoning for a century. A fine Georgian doorway, isn't it? The spacious hall with its stone staircase swinging around its walls to the storeys above is not deprived of its dignity by the earnest little boys playing marbles on a remaining portion of level paving, or by the many muddy, rusted bicycles against the walls, or by the prams, mangles, gas-cookers outside the doors of the ground floor and the landings above. Even the humble washing bannered aloft in mounting lines from landing-rail to landing-rail, seem grandly candid in their exposition of poverty's tattered "unmentionables."

We ascended the stairs behind a porter humping a sack of coal. A woman with an enamelled slop-pail, flattening herself to the wall to give us passage, bids us a kindly "Good morning" with as much freedom from embarrassment as though her pail had been a basket of arum lilies. Overpowering all the cooking and other domestic odours, we smell the warm dry rot of senile wood and age-sodden walls.

We are admitted to a room by a white-haired woman, younger sister to our blind friend. It is a very large apartment, so high and sparsely furnished that it holds the resonance of a chapel. Four wide, deeply recessed windows look down on to the street. Between the windows and on the opposite wall still remain the sconces of the pre-gas days. The richly corniced ceiling has as the central chandelier medallion an eagle in flight with a lamb clutched in its talons, surrounded by attacking swallows. An exquisite example of the plasterer's art, no doubt, but equally a cruelly blood-thirsty topic to have hovered over the heads of My Lady's fair guests and over the succeeding generations who have used the room as an all-in dwelling.

A very aged blind lady is sitting at a starved fire in a modern, jerry-made grate (the original one with its rich overmantel was sold years ago to a collector). We chat with her, but very little about the War and the dreadfulness of the moment. She prefers to speak of that past of which she is so acutely intelligent. We learn that her world is compressed within that room and house with lesser interests in the worlds of other poor souls' houses in the neighbourhood. Circumscribed so minutely though her field may be, names of people were mentioned who have earned honourable or dishonourable place in long past or more recent history. Leaving her is

like being interrupted in the reading of a good old-fashioned book.

About fifty yards down the street we go into another big house, this time down to the basement. Whatever there may be of past affluence remaining in the upper storeys, there is none down here. It is almost dungeon dark, the only light comes through a dirty, paper-patched window and from the glimmer of a little votive lamp burning before a statue of the Sacred Heart. The grand old woman who thrives in this gloomy cellar is ninety-five years of age. She has lived on for a medium lifetime after the deaths of her husband and most of her children. When accustomed to the dimness of the place, it is seen that, apart from the bleached eye pupils, she is a finely-featured woman.

Most of her talk is of the goodness of God to her. She does not know the meaning of cant as a means of soliciting alms from visiting nuns or the ladies of the Council. She tells us that she never went to school, even though her mother was a schoolmistress. Her mother died too young for that. She took her place at the wash-tub at thirteen, and she has washed and scrubbed and moiled her life's journey through nearly a hundred years. What a thoroughbred in body and mind she is to have accomplished it!

Nearby we visit yet another tenemental mansion and ascend a similar fine staircase as the one already described, but this time we go to the very top.

On the wall across from the landing, high out of reach of tampering hands, is another (this time vertical) plaster medallion, circled with a protuberance, something like a motor-bus tyre. Within is depicted a muscular man, fording a river, leading a little boy by the hand. The child seems to have the same concern for the play-ball he clutches to his breast with his free hand as the man has to get him safely over. Presumably, it is a variation of St. Christopher's exploit. It is gratifying to see that none of the mischievous juveniles of this or past times have defaced this kindly and beautiful piece of work. Two ladies, one blind, as if inspired by St. Christopher, share their Old Age Pension livelihood with a cat and dog.

Three minutes' walk from these once opulent residences are hill-sized blocks of many-winged municipal flats, now housing the dwellers from the slum hovels which had come and gone during the inverted lifetime of the old mansions. In them, from 4s. to 8s. a week, may be rented the poor man's compromise of a city-centre home. They are all hard brick, concrete, iron, glittering glass and brass, with nothing but the noises from their aced courtyards, their crowded stairways, and the meetings over the

communal ash-chutes or at the clothes lines, to disturb their artificial privacy.

We visit several blind people living on varying floors of these blocks. We pass up and down cold shafts of jerkily turning stairs and along giddily high balconies, where the doors are so numerous that the alphabet is called upon to assist the numerals in identification.

The blind living here are mostly young or middle-aged, doing their brave best to carry on as normally as their handicap permits. They are modern-minded and are chiefly concerned in the functioning of the radio sets the Council has loaned them. The tragic present is of more pressing interest to them than the domesticities of the families of the long-dead noblemen who inhabited those old, black houses over there.

To finish. Just a few paragraphs to a blind, little old gentleman who lives not in a decadent palace or in a clean, self-contained flat, but in one small room of a bad, old-fashioned slum.

He is totally blind and lives alone. Kindly neighbours make his life possible by attending to his domestic wants. He is too physically weak to fend for himself. Despite the unselfish strivings of the good neighbours, the room is too rotten to be kept clean. The only way to accomplish it would be by complete demolition. But to remove him from his home to the most sympathetic of infirmaries would be to kill him.

He was really pleased to meet us. After some preliminary talk, he was led to speak of himself in the years of his eyesight. He had been a silk weaver, the last of a Huguenot family of weavers who came to this country for shelter from the Edict of Nantes. He was soon thoroughly enjoying himself telling us of the grand poplin weavings he had made in his day to the orders of dignitaries of the Church, State, and families of renown. He told us in language as dainty as the delicate material he described. None of us will forget the story of his last beautiful weave.

A wealthy young lady renounced the outer world to cloister herself till death as a Poor Clare nun. Her last voluptuous expenditure was on the gold-embroidered poplin silk dress in which she presented herself at the Altar as a Bride of Christ. The robe had to be woven and made so that after the ceremony it could be taken apart and transformed into a complete set of High Mass vestments of chasuble, dalmatic and tunic, for the celebrant, deacon and sub-deacon.

Wearing the necessary white gloves, he spent many weeks of punctilious artistry at the labour. There was then no known method whereby human sweat stains could be removed from white poplin. When finished, he handed his precious and spotless creation over to his apprentice to roll in the inter-lining, double-sided silver paper for transport to the dressmaker.

Before despatching, it had to be inspected and passed by the owner of the silk mills. In the presence of the master, the weaver and the apprentice, the owner gently unrolled a yard or two with gloved hands. . . . The silk was horribly mottled with the prints of sweaty thumbs and fingers! The boy had not worn his gloves.

The master was a gentleman. At his request and at his own expense, he set our little friend to make another weaving. Through long broiling days and far into the sultry nights he worked so that the dress might be completed in time for the Reception Ceremony. And it was done!

* * *

He did not say that the overwrought task had blinded him, but simply that the sight began to fail soon afterwards. And in the ugly dilapidation and poverty of that dismal room, he pensively queried, with stabbing pathos: "I wonder if my vestments are still in use?" Very reverently we pray that they are; for, God knows, *they were most costly!*

HOME NEWS

N.I.B. Liverpool Branch Office.—Owing to damage by air raid to the premises in which this office was situated, it has now been removed to premises outside the centre of the city, and the present address of the Liverpool Branch Office of the National Institute for the Blind is "Woodholme," Halewood Road, Gateacre, nr. Liverpool. Telephone: Gateacre 1229.

Blind Basket Makers.—The following resolution has been passed at a meeting of the North-Eastern Counties Skep and Basket Making Employers Association: "That the ratio of sighted basket makers to blind basket makers

in the employment of institutions for the blind be not exceeding one sighted to five blind, with the exception that the foreman of the department, the teacher, and labourer, and also persons who have been registered blind persons and later decertified, be not taken into account in the said ratio."

London Association and Barclay Workshops.—The Knitwear Factory of the London Association for the Blind and the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women (the latter to be known as the Association's Weaving and Knitting Department) are now, and it is hoped permanently,

housed at 19-21, Crawford Street, Baker Street, London, W.1. The new telephone number is Welbeck 2963 (3 lines).

Fine War Work by the Blind at Stoke-on-Trent.

—Soon after the outbreak of hostilities, the blind women in the Stoke-on-Trent Workshops formed a Knitting Group to make up comforts for the troops and Civil Defence workers. Up to date, the Group has supplied over 450 garments.

The Workshops Sports Club has co-operated in this effort by allocation of 50 per cent. of their weekly subscriptions for the purchase of wool, to be used by the Women's Knitting Group.

The blind people of Stoke-on-Trent responded to the appeal made by the Lord Mayor of the city on behalf of the local Spitfire Fund, organising an effort entirely on their own initiative, and handed to the Lord Mayor a cheque for £172 from the blind people of Stoke-on-Trent.

Patriotism of Six Blind Pensioners.—Six blind women evacuees have sent to Lord Provost Wilson, Dundee, through the Matron of the Bannatyne Home of Rest, Newtyle, 36s. as a free gift to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The women, wanting to do something to help the war, agreed to pay 1s. 6d. each a week for a month, this being the first increase on their blind pension.

Feeding-stuffs for Blind Poultry-keepers.—

Mr. F. Lionel Watkins, Secretary of the Newport and Monmouth Association for the Blind, has been notified by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries that a blind person who has been registered for rations for his poultry by the County War Agricultural Committee may be allowed on application additional coupons for the summer period, to bring his rations up to the rate of one hundredweight for each ten laying birds kept in June, 1939, or in December, 1940, if no figures are available for June, 1939. He must be able to satisfy the Committee that he is registered as blind under the Blind Persons Act, 1920. Mr. Watkins is to be congratulated on having obtained this ruling from the Ministry.

War Emergency Grants Fund.—The National Institute for the Blind has circulated to all agencies for the blind a letter giving particulars of the War Emergency Grants Fund, the establishment of which was announced in last month's issue of *THE NEW BEACON*, and describing how the Fund will be administered.

The scheme of administration has been drawn up by the Institute's Assistance Sub-Committee. Its main features were given last month, but we briefly recapitulate them here for the convenience of readers:—

1. Grants will be made to blind people affected in mind, body or estate by enemy action. They

are designed in particular to meet promptly distress caused by losses for which adequate compensation cannot be otherwise obtained.

2. Applications will ordinarily be made through Local Agencies on behalf of individuals. In all cases, the Institute will consult the Local Agency. In applying for grants, Local Agencies should give evidence of the need for a grant over and above other available means of compensation and relief, and of the fact that application to the full amount of such means has been made.

3. It is recognised that the need for an extra grant will arise in some cases to meet an indirect rather than a direct need.

4. Grants will be available for blind persons resident in Scotland as well as in England and Wales.

5. In making applications, regard should be had for eligibility for assistance from the Sir Beachcroft Towse ex-Service Fund.

6. Assistance by loan will not be made in ordinary circumstances.

7. Grants for one individual will not ordinarily exceed £10, but this is not a hard-and-fast rule.

8. Grants will be made only for persons registered as blind. Grants will not be made to dependants of blind persons.

9. Applications should be addressed to the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1, and marked "War Emergency Grants Fund."

N.I.B. Council Meeting at Oxford.—The Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind held its Spring Quarterly Meeting outside London for the first time. Owing to the inadvisability of holding many meetings in London it was decided to take an Oxford College for three consecutive days and hold meetings of all main committees and of the Council there. The Master and Fellows of Balliol College put the college at the disposal of the Institute; and there was a large attendance of members who slept in the college rooms, dined in the college hall and had the use of the junior common room and other charming quarters. These arrangements were so successful that the Annual General Meeting of the Institute and of the Council, with all main committee meetings, will also be held at Balliol College, Oxford, on July 29th, 30th and 31st.

Welfare of the Blind: War Savings.—An important circular (2357) bearing this title has just been issued by the Ministry of Health to local authorities, drawing attention to Section 3 of the Determination of Needs Act, 1941. Under this section, in determining financial assistance to be granted under the Blind Persons Act the capital value or any income receivable

from the first £375 of a blind person's war savings are to be disregarded in addition to any money and investments treated as capital assets and already disregarded under other enactments.

The section came into force on June 2, 1941, and provides that before a date to be determined by an Order in Council (after the war) the amount of a person's war savings will be the amount of those savings at the time when his resources were computed—*e.g.*, for purposes of financial assistance under the Blind Persons Acts.

The circular gives an example of the way in which a person's war savings are to be computed in accordance with the Second Schedule of the Act, and explains that the Controller of the P.O. Savings Bank will assist local authorities if they suspect that alleged war savings are in fact mostly accumulated savings taken out of one of the securities mentioned in the Schedule (Government Stock held on the Post Office register issued after September 2, 1939, National Savings Certificates, money on loan to the Treasury without interest, amounts in P.O. Savings Bank or Trustee Savings Bank), and re-invested in another of those securities after August 14, 1940.

EMPIRE NEWS

St. Dunstan's in South Africa.—St. Dunstan's has made arrangements for the establishment at the Military Hospital at Capetown of special facilities for men of the British, New Zealand, Canadian, and Australian forces engaged in the Middle East, who are blinded, to receive instruction and training for early rehabilitation in their future lives.

Sir Ian Fraser, Chairman of St. Dunstan's, said that it was conceivable that there might be considerable delays before the men could be transported to this country, and it was the earnest desire of St. Dunstan's to utilise this gap to the fullest advantage. The Dominion Governments have appointed St. Dunstan's their agents for the re-education and training of Dominion troops who are blinded in the United Kingdom, or are evacuated to the United Kingdom, but where Dominion troops are evacuated to South Africa and then either stay in South Africa, in the case of the Union men, or go to Australia or New Zealand because their homes are there, it is very unlikely they will reach St. Dunstan's in this country until after the war.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of :—

The **Rev. Harold Onslow Gibb**, at Saintsbury Close, near Broadway, formerly Vicar of Sherbourne, Warwick. He was appointed curate of Harrow School Mission in 1911. He had served in the South African War, and in the War of 1914-18 he was a lieutenant in the 4th Dragoon Guards. He was severely wounded in 1915 and lost his sight.

Sir James Frazer, O.M., the famous anthropologist and writer. Despite loss of sight in the last year of his life, he continued his work; the Drapers' Company granted him £400 a year to enable him to employ secretaries and the British Museum gave him a room. His greatest help in all his labours was his wife, who, in later life, became stone deaf. But neither blindness nor deafness could stop their self-appointed tasks, and the only relief they allowed themselves was to rise at 6.30 a.m. instead of at 4 a.m.

Edmund Toft, at St. Dunstan's Hospital, Church Stretton, Shropshire, aged 46. Blinded in the last war, he became a masseur and osteopath and established a remunerative practice in London. He served as a member of the Council of the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastics, of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind, and of the Association of Certificated Blind Masseurs, and as chairman of St. Dunstan's Massage Advisory Committee. Earlier in the present war he started a massage class for the instruction of young blinded ex-Service men at St. Dunstan's Training Centre in Shropshire.

John Hunter, A.R.C.O., F.R.C.O., organist to Kirkcaldy Corporation and choirmaster of Abbotshall Church. He was a native of Kirkcaldy and studied with distinction at the Royal Blind School, Craigmillar, Edinburgh, under Dr. Lee Aston. He graduated from college in 1906 and was appointed organist and choirmaster at Newburgh Parish Church, but returned to Kirkcaldy in 1918. He was well known as an organ recitalist all over Scotland, and on three occasions broadcast a special children's service from Abbotshall Church. He demonstrated his skill in voice training and ensemble singing as conductor of the Dorian Choir, which came prominently before the public at leading musical festivals.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM IN RETURN FOR SERVICE

By F. W. PRESTON-JARMAN.

THE proposal concerned with the solution of our post-war social problems, contained in an address delivered by the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. R. A. Butler, and broadcast at divine service towards the end of 1940, was of outstanding interest and importance.

Among the many in the kingdom whose particular notice is called for, must unquestionably be numbered those who lack sight, and all their friends and well-wishers.

But briefly Mr. Butler's proposal was that in return for services every citizen should receive from the State a guarantee of economic freedom.

Of course, this proposal is not altogether a new one. But it is fair to suppose that it embodies an up-to-date version of the ideas hitherto forming the basis of, and perhaps some fresh ones that would now support, any such proposal. For instance, in these days, every citizen must surely mean every woman as well as every man.

Still, up to date in its basis as the proposal may be, it represents as yet little more than an ideal, the realisation of which is inevitably surrounded by practical difficulties. Difficulties, too, that can probably only be surmounted by a patient study of them, and by the education of present and future citizens up to a full recognition of their duties as well as of their rights.

Yet, for the moment, little more than an ideal; but, nevertheless, an ideal at which a multitude can aim. By its realisation would the sightless benefit, and, if so, could they, as a whole, be reasonably expected to make a corresponding, and indeed, a normal return?

As we all know, economic freedom does not always pave the way to enterprise and efficiency. But economic freedom is sometimes the equivalent of capital; and the absence of capital, as we also know, has held back many a promising venture, thwarted many a stout heart. Let there be a grave physical handicap, and the chances are that capital of any description may be reckoned at double its usual worth.

It will be readily agreed that under existing circumstances the nation does not get the best out of the sightless. Equally, so long as they do not enjoy adequate opportunities of exercising their talents, the sightless cannot claim to be among those who pull their full weight for the common good.

Perhaps, therefore, it may be assumed that the grant of economic freedom to the sightless would enable them to release a store of initiative and energy that would otherwise stay in bond. But could such released initiative and energy be so directed and applied that both State and sightless would have a fair chance of becoming more truly efficient, and all-round progress would in fact result?

On this point, cogent reasons for pessimism would not appear to be obvious. The visual handicap alone would never prevent man or woman from giving useful service to the State. Moreover, it would matter little whether the service that could be offered were the most elementary form of manual work, or the application of brilliant mental powers, the modern State is clearly capable of absorbing it. (How overwhelmingly this is demonstrated in war-time Britain!)

It is not suggested here, and, indeed, it would be premature to suggest, that chief benefit from economic freedom would, among the sightless, be derived by those of high mental calibre; those, for one example, who have the capacity to think out and debate the problems of the day. Yet, at times, it would almost seem that where the magic key of economic freedom is missing, the visual handicap tends to secure the doors of progress and satisfaction rather more often against those with good mental powers than against those less well endowed.

From time to time, and in various directions, the State has seen fit to organise and harness experience. Definite steps, however, to marshal the *intelligence* of the country have not been so much in evidence; and it is a matter for interesting speculation whether, in order to make economic freedom work and pay, the State would be forced to marshal both intelligence and experience on the grand scale. Provided old fetters on enterprise were not replaced by new, it might well be that, as a group, the sightless could give a welcome to any such comprehensive measures.

Be that as it may, perhaps an earlier note in this article can now be usefully amplified. With the advent of economic freedom, those of the sightless with the requisite talent, but previously held back, may conceivably find openings to share in government. Manifestly the host of councils throughout the land working as for, or with, the central or local controlling

body, could furnish them with abundant scope. Success would not only owe them a due measure of self-satisfaction, but, obviously, would also ensure that the State would get its full quota of service from them. Here and there they might prove a special asset, if for no other reason than their probable willingness and ability to make strictly regular attendance at meetings, etc.

It can scarcely be disputed that much excellent spade work towards economic freedom in return for service has, in effect, already been done within the sightless world. Yet, at this shape, it would be unwise to indulge any feeling that on the whole they are likely to be quicker than any other group in the community to perceive the advantages, and to accept their responsibilities, issuing from such a great reform. For one thing, sturdy as the general morale of the sightless may always be, it is only prudent to allow for the existence here

and there of some self-pity. And it is too much to hope that self-pity, and all that it can imply, could ever be swiftly dislodged by the prospect, or even the arrival, of economic freedom.

Nevertheless, it may not be unreasonable to regard the sightless as a good average team, which, encouraged by its supporters, should stand to gain, and, in the long run, further the common good, by a careful survey of a promising ideal, and by steady training for the day of its realisation. A good average team, moreover, that when economic freedom comes, may be expected to settle its affairs with the State.

Furthermore, any members of the team who, sorely chastened, could give little or no service, might still take comfort. For their account could be met by other members able and willing to give the State more than its rightful due. In short, their account with the State could be settled by good team work.

MOON UNDER DIFFICULTIES

THE stone corridors were long, the flights of stone steps were longer, but the Home Teacher arrived at last, triumphant if breathless, at the top floor where were the dormitory and day-room used by the old men. The nun in charge, cheerful and serene, introduced her to the elderly blind man in the corner who rose immediately with an old-world dignity of manner and speech for which she was unprepared. He was indeed more aristocratic than the aristocrats. He solved the mystery himself by announcing that he had been a butler. The Home Teacher felt considerably relieved, as she had feared he must be a duke who had fallen on hard times and she hadn't the faintest notion of how she should address him.

The Duke (that name will do as well as any other) was most anxious to learn to read Moon, so they made their way from the armchair to the long, varnished table in the middle of the room and he counted the drawer handles along until he came to his own place and they settled down to work. It was then that the Home Teacher realised that "Moon Made Easy" was going to be somewhat difficult. A portable wireless-set sprayed forth a loud and relentless stream of knowledge addressed to no one in particular, while four budgerigars, determined not to be outdone, retaliated in their own particularly forceful language. The dear old deaf gentleman in the skull cap, sitting just behind them, was receiving a visit from his daughter who, despite the combined bombardment from

the B.B.C. and the budgerigars, was putting up a penetrating barrage of conversation concerning "Our Alf."

The Duke's fingers were large and stiff and his touch practically non-existent, but he was quite determined to succeed and confident that he would ultimately do so, but the going was hard and slow.

The Home Teacher could only be admitted on visiting days and there was no other room available, so, week by week, on Thursday afternoons she climbed to the Tower of Babel and amidst the outpourings of the British Broadcasting Corporation, the quarrels and reconciliations of the budgerigars and the latest escapades of Our Alf, she shouted advice and encouragement and corrections at the Duke, whose patient persistence in the face of all obstacles was wholly admirable. After about five lessons the first page was really mastered and the Duke passed on to Jeff in the throes of a headache and deaf Ada in the proud possession of a cabbage. In due course he actually "looked in on a babe" and eventually arrived, after months of hard work, at the contractions, where he suddenly developed a much better touch and romped through "The Life of Dr. Moon" in one week.

That was a long time ago and when the Home Teacher visited the Duke recently she noticed many changes. Her old friend in the skull cap has passed on and another old man sits in his chair now. The budgerigars have also dis-

appeared. There aren't any jars of sweets in the table drawers or much tobacco in the pouches. The Duke described how, when the siren goes in the night, they are all taken down to the cellars and there he reads his beloved Moon, either to himself or to those around.

Sometimes when the Home Teacher is awakened by the familiar wail she sees in imagination that long, slow procession of aged

men and women being shepherded down the stone steps by the brave and kindly nuns in their flowing black gowns and large white headaddresses. And last of all comes the Duke, unhurried and unperturbed, carrying under his arm a big volume. For it is Moon under difficulties again—only with a difference.

A. I. B.

PIPE PLAYING FOR THE BLIND

By OLIVE M. PERROTT.

In THE NEW BEACON for March 15th, 1933, there appeared an article on Pipe Making and Pipe Playing, by Margaret James, Director of the Pipers' Guild. The following article gives some idea of recent development of interest in the pastime amongst the blind.

MUSIC is one of God's greatest gifts, although it is not given to all to be performers.

Since the revival of pipe playing, avenues of music have been opened to countless people who have never had the opportunity of making music for themselves.

About ten years ago, in a remote Cotswold village, after much experimenting and with infinite patience, Margaret James gave to the world the bamboo pipe, perfected from the pipe used by shepherd folk in past ages and in all countries.

Making and playing started in a very simple way for children, but gradually other kinds and sizes were added and it is now possible to play all types of music, from simple nursery rhymes to difficult 5pt. madrigals. This music on these instruments is enjoyed by old and young, rich and poor.

In 1932, Margaret James founded the Pipers' Guild, with Dr. Vaughan Williams as President. From this small beginning in the Cotswolds, the movement has spread to all countries. Besides many in England, there are branches in Scotland, Ireland, Canada, America and, until the war, several countries on the Continent.

Every member of the Guild makes his or her own pipe, and has the satisfaction of producing a beautiful musical instrument. The sound is soft and mellow, and when well played is most pleasing to listen to.

Two years ago I was asked to teach pipe-making to a group of blind men and women in one of the social clubs. At first it was rather experimental, and among other difficulties was that of infrequent classes. The clubs meet only once a month, which is not nearly often enough for this work.

All the members make their own pipes, and learn to play as they make. Holes are carved and tuned one by one, and the technique of playing and tonguing is mastered one step at

a time. There is much more technique attached to piping than is generally realised.

At the end of eight lessons, these people were playing together simple tunes, with and without piano accompaniment. There are now two or three of this group playing quite difficult things, and it is hoped to commence part playing on treble, alto and tenor pipes when the clubs resume in the spring.

This year, three new clubs were added, with much the same results as the first one.

These people are very patient, and content to go slowly, but are thrilled to feel they have made their own pipe, and can actually produce beautiful tunes, a thing undreamed of. It gives enormous pleasure and happiness to blind people who are cut off from so many joys and pleasures of this life.

One could give many instances. An outstanding case is that of one old man, well over 70, to whom his pipe was one of the joys of his latter days. He would sit for hours finding out forgotten tunes and learning new ones. He went to his rest a few months ago.

The cost of pipes is so small that a whole club can be equipped for a few shillings, and anyone with average musical and teaching abilities can form a group and get results quite quickly.

Among other aims of the Guild is that of sharing experiences with others: that is one of the many reasons why piping is so well worth doing.

I can think of no better use of our craft than of helping blind men and women to make music for themselves in their daily life. As one woman remarked to me, "Pipes are one of the best things ever given to the blind; we do appreciate what they can be to us."

I shall be very happy to give any further information to anyone interested. Letters should be addressed to me c/o the Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Gt. Portland Street, London, W.1.

SALUTE TO HOME TEACHERS

THIS year the Blind Persons Act, 1920, comes of age, and it is therefore fitting that a tribute should be paid to a body of workers whose task it is to translate into the warmth of personal friendliness and kindness the legal language of an Act of Parliament. Those who have read in recent issues of *THE NEW BEACON* stories of home teachers in bombed areas can guess something of what the service may mean to frightened old people who face the unpleasing alternatives of living in comparative safety in unfamiliar surroundings or in unquestioned danger in a familiar environment; people for whom the old phrase "safe as houses" now has a grimly ironical ring. Only those who have been in close contact with the home-teaching service in town and country know what it does; and how lessons in Braille and handicrafts and the almonising of domiciliary assistance are but trivial incidents in a programme of humane service that defies any neat analysis in a tabulated list of duties, but brings much happiness into lonely lives.

Members of Selection Committees are rather fond of saying that home teachers must regard their work as a vocation. Of course they must; only those who work from such a sense can face the long hours, much walking in rain or mud, much sitting in over-heated, under-ventilated and often squalid little rooms, much patient listening to long drawn-out and sometimes all too familiar stories. But people who talk of vocation should not forget that it is quite possible to have a sense of vocation, and yet be adequately paid; indeed the home teacher whose salary allows her to enjoy good holidays, a Library subscription, an occasional theatre, and the hope of an old age removed from penury, can more reasonably be expected to show that self-forgetfulness and serenity upon which good work largely depends. Fair hours of work; a limited number of people on each Register, so that the home teacher can give sympathetic thought and time to individual problems; opportunities to meet her fellow workers in the field for exchange of ideas and mental stimulus; a good annual holiday; an adequate salary and a superannuation scheme. These are some of the essentials of a good home-teaching service.

It must not be forgotten, however, that if good conditions of work are expected, the qualifications of the teachers must reach a high level. For this reason, workers for the blind will watch with special interest the training course for home teachers recently inaugurated by the Southern Regional Association—the first systematic course of its kind in the southern area, and one which, by giving prospective home teachers some training in handicrafts, in field-work and in the theoretical side of their task, should prove of the greatest value to them and to the local authorities which will employ them.

Home teachers who hold the certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind are entitled to become members of that body, and a fairly large number of home teachers have availed themselves of the opportunity. It was a generous gesture on the part of the College to open its doors thus, but it is questionable whether a body designed to further the interests of the school teacher is really adapted to protect those of the home teacher, whose problems are so different. It is a point upon which it would be interesting to have the views of home teachers. Should they have some organisation of their own, or are they satisfied with the present position? Perhaps owing to war-time restrictions on travel any new organisation must await the longed-for "after the war" period. But should not planning for peace begin now? What do home teachers think about it? If these remarks provoke no correspondence it will suggest that the time is *not* ripe; but if there are any home teachers with points of view to express, we offer them our columns as their forum, reminding them that letters may be published anonymously, provided the Editor is given names and addresses as evidence of good faith. And, whatever their views, we end, as we began, with a tribute to the fine part they are playing to-day in national service.

THE EDITOR.

TEACHING METHODS

The Teaching of Braille Reading ; The Use of Talking Books in Schools

In the April issue of THE NEW BEACON were two articles relative to methods of teaching—"Some Suggested Developments," by H. R. Driver, and "The Teaching of Braille Reading," by a Teacher in a Blind Institution. The latter article suggested certain improvements in the teaching of Braille to adults, while Mr. Driver dwelt mainly on the possibilities of the Talking Book in schools.

We have received a number of most interesting and useful comments on these two subjects, and we give them below. In the first article, "E.E." deals with the two subjects ; in the next Miss Phyllis Monk and Mr. P. S. Sumner comment on the Teaching of Braille ; then "B.O.B." and Messrs. R. Peppitt and W. R. Plear discuss Talking Books in schools ; and finally Dr. J. N. Langdon writes on Mr. Driver's article as a whole.

A TEACHER INTERVENES

TWO articles in the April issue of THE NEW BEACON, both written with evident sincerity, display considerable anxiety as to the teaching methods employed both in the schools and in the home-teaching service. A few footnotes by a practical teacher and one who has had considerable experience in testing the ability of school teachers and home teachers through the examinations of the College of Teachers of the Blind, might do something to reassure readers and perhaps the contributors themselves that much of their criticism is being met.

In both school and home-teaching examinations much attention is directed to the manner of presenting Braille by the candidates. They have not only to master the theory of Braille, but are examined in the methods of teaching it and, although every consideration is given to individual methods of teaching, a candidate must satisfy the examiners that those methods are effective.

No subject, I am sure, has been more discussed, both in meetings of teachers and in their magazine, than the question of the best technique to be employed in introducing Braille to blind pupils both children and adults, and if the results of that teaching do not satisfy your contributors, it is not through lack of experiment in the best methods. To my mind there is no golden rule either for learning or teaching Braille. So much depends on the receptivity of the learner, more perhaps on the ability of the teacher to adapt himself to the needs of his pupil and particularly to modify methods which he might use very successfully in some cases but not in others.

Some teachers take the whole of a simple word at a time, such as "Tom," relating it to a specific conception in the person of the boy "Tom." There is much to be said for this

method as it follows very closely the "look and say" method used with seeing children. It follows, too, the natural method of acquiring the spoken language, which is not concerned, at first, with the phonetic constituents of a word, but proceeds to associate a word with a mental concept. Other teachers prefer to build up the word from its components, giving the articulation associated with each letter. Many children, and adults, too, are word blind, that is, they are unable to correlate the written characters with the spoken sounds. In our language one wonders why there are not more of these.

How far should giant Braille be used, if at all? It is obvious that for beginners, meeting Braille for the first time, the relative position of the dots, the fundamental principle in Braille, must be realised by touch. It is hopeless to expect this to be done with small Braille, and for this first purpose the use of giant Braille and the Braillette Board is, I think, fully justified. I agree with your contributor who suggests the immediate use of column 1 word signs. Whether it is desirable to introduce contractions while the pupil is still in the early stages has been much debated. My own view is that it depends on the feeling for words or literary sense of the pupil. To teach Grade 1 to the intelligent quick pupil with a good touch and then undo much of the training by introducing the signs and contractions of Grade 2 is to waste time and effort. I would introduce as many contractions as possible as early as possible if the pupil, child or adult, showed keenness in reading and the desire to master Braille. In an adult, if the touch is not responsive, to continue with Braille is irksome and profitless, but there is an inclination to be discouraged and to give up too soon in a large number of cases. More interest is aroused and maintained when

the teacher is able to present the matter already learned in a new form and in a progressive manner. Here again it is expedient to give simple words using the letters already known before proceeding with the whole alphabet.

The position of the Talking Book in the formal education of the blind is very much on a par with that of the other mechanical aids to teaching, the gramophone, the wireless and the cinema. They are excellent and fulfil a very useful purpose when they are used as supplementary to the teacher's efforts and to the general scheme of study which is being taken. None of these is able to take the place of the teacher, and no aid of this kind is able to vitalise the subject matter in the way a first-class teacher can make a subject become a living reality to his class. We must remember that teaching presupposes two complementary factors, the teacher and the taught. Each reacts on the other and neither can give of his best without that indefinable contact that links them. The teacher must at all times estimate the response of his class, stimulate their attention and constantly be alert to adapt and clarify his matter for the better assimilation of his teaching by the pupils. This is not to say that the Talking Book and the other aids cannot be developed for more fruitful use in the classroom.

Apart from recreational purposes and out-of-school cultural activities, how far can the use of the Talking Book be extended?

Mr. Driver has mentioned a few of the subjects in which its use can very profitably be recommended. Incidentally, one sympathises with him in his experiences of the geography lesson, and one wishes he could have heard the dozens of first-class lessons in this subject it has been my privilege to hear during my experience as an examiner for the College. To-day, I can assure readers that there can be little doubt that the teaching of geography is done, generally, in the most vivid, interesting and stimulating manner. The memorising of lists of capes, rivers, mountains, to the accompaniment of a monotonous chant, is surely a thing of the past. The modern approach is to show the

influence of physical conditions on human development with a strong specialisation to local considerations.

I cordially agree that those experiences which cannot be brought into the classroom by the teacher should be introduced from without, but practical teachers know only too well what happens when a simulated interest in a Wireless voice or a Talking Book comes to be assessed.

There seems much to be said for what used to be known as "Object lessons." These have now been co-ordinated into well-prepared schemes of elementary science covering many features of interest from biology to magnetism and electricity and many more. The isolated lesson on "The Lever" is now part of a scheme on mechanics. Lessons in practical elementary science, illustrated by experiments adapted to the needs of blind pupils, are a part of the curriculum of most schools. Considerable ingenuity and a flair for adaptation are called for from the teacher, but in spite of difficulties there are many interesting schemes of study available.

In our own school, the provision of a pets' corner made nature study a real joy to the children, who examined by touch the small animals and the fine collection of birds we collected and housed. No Wireless Talk or Talking Book could be a substitute for this. We were fortunate, too, in assembling a good collection of stuffed animals and birds, human and animal bones, mechanical models, sets of miniature railways and specimens of materials used in industrial processes at various stages of manufacture. These were supplemented by borrowing from the interesting collection kindly lent to the schools by the National Institute for the Blind.

Mr. Driver may not be aware that there is a fairly considerable body of literature on games for the blind. It has been the subject of many papers at teachers' meetings, and the National Institute for the Blind has an admirable booklet on the subject.

A Braille Encyclopædia! What a dream for teachers and students! What a nightmare for the publisher!

E. E.

THE TEACHING OF BRAILLE READING

SINCE it will surely be agreed by all teachers and adult learners of Braille by touch that confidence in the fingers' ability to read is of first importance, the following suggestions may help to gain this without risk of periods of depression when the beginner has to be left to practise and progress alone.

First build up the whole alphabet on the Braillette Board, with its nails, so as to show clearly such scheme as there is between first, second and third line letters and also to bring out the importance of the dots' positions in the cells, using the number names for the dots. Leave this board, complete with alphabet, with the beginner and a second, perhaps, for him to

practise letter building on. Give him also a sheet (paper, card or metal) with the alphabet well spaced, arranged in the same way as on the Braillette Board and with dots the normal Braille size. These will serve as a key for reference until the letters are safely memorised. Give the beginner also one or more sheets of first-line letters, dodged about, at least one space between each, from which the beginner can test himself, using the keys for checking. Let these lead on to words and simple sentences, built up mostly of first-line letters, double spacing between words. Give sheets for second and third-line letter practice of similar plan, gradually introducing them into words and sentences, still letters single spaced and words double, until the beginner is absolutely at home with the feel of them. He needs warning that his touch will, at first, tire so that many short practices are better than prolonged efforts.

For getting used to normal Braille, with spacing only between words, sheets could be left in which short simple sentences are brailled first in the "spaced" way and each immediately followed by the same sentence in ordinary Uncontracted Braille. This idea of accustoming the fingers to the space taken by the letters by knowing "the answer" and getting used to the feel of them close up, avoids the set-back due to trying to make out dot groups built up by reading parts of two letters as one, a stage apt to be depressing to an adult. A good deal of practice on these lines, varied also by brailled nursery rhymes or other matter known by heart, would lead the learner to want to test himself out on the unknown, too, and lead on to reading any uncontracted sentences and stories—in good, clear (that is unsquashed) Braille—that are likely to be enlivening to the individual.

To secure such a good sense of touch that real confidence in finger reading is established Uncontracted Braille might well be read until the rate is good enough to bring interest in the subject matter. The use of a Stainsby Braille Writer would also add interest and so help reading at this stage and later.

Being now good with the touch of it, Grade II could be tackled at whatever rate the individual's memory and keenness prompted, using Grade I for the explanation of its signs, as in the all-Braille editions of Standard English Braille. In short, to give plenty of time to Grade I touch practice before embarking on the memory work of Grade II would make the transfer from one to the other a relatively quick and encouraging process, instead of the pupil being expected to keep learning signs for meaningless letter groups, when the fingers were still strange to

all Braille and at a time of strain, if recently blinded, when the impossibility of helping out one's touch with sight would hit hard. And if some adults, through ill-health or other cause, felt the learning of Contracted Braille too great a trial, let there be more books in Grade I for them.

There is a strong case for the systematic use of the capital sign, dot 6 before the letter, whenever it is used in print and for the same reasons of clarity and style as print requires. Its use in England as well as America would surely be especially welcome to those new to Braille, so that proper names would be quickly recognised as such and the correct use of capitals by all blind typists come naturally.

PHYLLIS MONK.

Chorlwood College.

AS one who learned Braille at twenty and has taught it a good deal since, I welcome the opportunity of contributing a few ideas suggested by the interesting article on the subject in the April issue of *THE NEW BEACON*. Taking the points in the order in which the writer raises them:—

(1) Unlike the blinded of the last war, the newcomers into the blind world of this war will comprise people of both sexes and all ages, embracing every variety of educational background. This being so, it is quite impossible to lay down any method of instruction as ideally best. Adults have usually been taught individually, and methods this time will need to be more than ever elastic. For this reason, such useful adjuncts as giant type and the Braillette Frame cannot be discarded in all cases. Hard-handed sons of toil will be all too apt to echo the blind Gloucester's cry, though in a different sense: "Were all the letters suns, I could not read them." Larger letters will help them to a better notion of shape and to something of a touch; and when they come to cope with type of standard-size, where the dots seem engaged in a close conspiracy to cause muddle and despondency, they will fare better rather than worse.

(2) I agree that the beginner would be encouraged if more sighted teachers read by touch; whatever their facility, they can scarcely forget their early difficulties, since Braille is bound to be a case of "easy writing" and "curst hard reading."

(3) In the third group of suggestions, it seems to me that your contributor exaggerates the tendency on the part of the learner to mental inversion, especially where the Stainsby-Wayne is used for writing; and I am all for

making most of the system by which all follows naturally from the first line. The first essential is therefore to know this line thoroughly. Confusion may be prevented by pointing out that F and J closely resemble the sighted capitals; that dot 1 appears in all the first five letters, dots 1 and 2 in the next three, and that dot 1 is absent from the last two; that reading downwards, the form of E is checked by O, and I by S. When the symbols have been learned as an ordered system, rational memory can always be relied on to remind one of a forgotten letter. The intelligent elderly gentleman who knew all the symbols by rote without being able to distinguish one by touch, presents an interesting object-lesson. He might easily have been acquainted with many fewer signs; but when you are groping for something in the dark, it is always best to know what you are seeking.

As the beginner's difficulty for a long time is that of reaching the end of a sentence before he has forgotten the beginning, little time should be wasted on Grade I Braille, which only makes slow reading slower. This merely stresses the need of memorising the single-letter words and contractions as soon as possible; fortunately, the abbreviations are usually self-explanatory in their reading context. Mnemonics are occasionally provided by such happy sequences of sense or nonsense as "Mother, name one part right some time" and "Cannot had many spirits." In the case of the final signs, it may be pointed out that as *-sion* alphabetically comes before *-tion*, so 4-6 N comes before 5-6 N; and the same principle applies to other pairs where confusion may arise.

To add a few further suggestions:

(4) The smooth onward movement of the finger may be encouraged by letting the pupil read over what he has just written; he may prepare a passage from a book, or renew his acquaintance with texts already familiar; in all such practice, the sense will meet him half-way. Other useful incentives are reading against time, or being paced by the teacher.

(5) Reading with both hands should be insisted on from the outset. Older beginners naturally find the left forefinger more sensitive, but reading entirely with this is very inconvenient, especially towards the ends of lines; so the other hand should be practised gradually to take over most of the line and relieve the awkwardness.

(6) The most topical matter for older readers, and that suiting the greatest variety of tastes, is likely to be found in current numbers of the magazines and in short stories which are not too rich in dialect.

(7) Good teachers are a first necessity. Braille is now in competition as a means of recreation with wireless and the talking book. The unimaginative teacher who applies a stereotyped method to all and sundry may easily prove the last straw to the camel's back. For the beginner, the promised land beyond the desert of painful efforts may be nothing more than the prospect of playing cards or lexicon; it may equally be the ability to read letters from friends, to keep his own accounts, or to study for a degree. Whatever it is, he should be encouraged to keep it in view.

P. S. SUMNER.

Worcester College.

THE USE OF TALKING BOOKS IN SCHOOLS

LET me begin by disclaiming any idea of knowing anything about anyone except blind secondary schoolboys, concerning whose needs alone I am writing: and I am quite aware that those needs form a very small part of the needs that the Talking Book has got to meet. But with those two qualifications, I think that the following points deserve consideration.

In the first place, to be critical (as I can afford to be, seeing that in general I am most sympathetic to Mr. Driver's ideas). I view with distinct alarm any proposal which would tend to *substitute* the Talking Book for the study of the written word, for three reasons: (a) there will always be so much wisdom that can only be obtained from the written text, that the fluent reading of Braille should be the first aim

of every teacher of the blind. (b) The use of the Talking Book as a medium for the imparting of knowledge will *appear* to offer an easier path to attainment than the reading of Braille. Such an appearance, even if true, would not necessarily condemn the Braille book, for short cuts are often long ways round. But, I suggest, such an appearance is, in fact, fallacious where a group of boys are concerned, for the speed at which each can assimilate the contents will vary. Moreover I must confess that I myself (and perhaps there are others like me) find that with all but the easiest books, I have to read and re-read some passages before I have really got the point—which is not practicable with a Talking Book. (c) It is often said, and with truth, that the spoken word carries its meaning home many a time where the reading of a book

to oneself does not. But I do not think that the word spoken by the Talking Book can be the equivalent of the "lecture" by the teacher who is known to the boys, and known by them. As an historian by trade, I never teach the same subject precisely the same way to any two different sets of boys, and part of the reason for this is that the needs of no one set of listeners are the same as those of another. The Talking Book cannot "temper the wind to the shorn lamb" in the way that a living teacher who knows his job can: the personal touch is lacking.

As a substitute for class teaching, then, I believe that the Talking Book is to be deprecated, as tending to discourage the learning of Braille reading, and as lacking that personal touch which makes the spoken word often preferable to the written word as a medium of instruction. I do not think that Mr. Driver advocated it as a substitute, but I feel that this point is fundamental, and unless it is accepted any use of the Talking Book may be fraught with some danger.

What of it as a handmaiden to Braille reading and class-teaching, intended (in the immortal phrase attributed to Pooh-bah) "to give verisimilitude to a bald and unconvincing narrative"?

(a) The provision of "background" in, say, a History Class. I confess to being somewhat sceptical of the value even of the B.B.C. Talks of this nature, and, by implication therefore, of Talking Books. For very small boys, I think they are often extremely useful: but for the middle and upper forms, I doubt if many people enjoy them except adults: and I am quite certain that the same sort of thing done by a teacher who has taken the trouble to make himself acquainted with the subject matter is infinitely more effective. At the same time, for the senior student, reading, let us say, for Higher Certificate, I conceive that, to be able to turn on the Talking Book for a chapter or two of Hammond's "Rise of Modern Industry," in the course of an Economic History Syllabus, or a chapter of Neale's "Queen Elizabeth," when reading the Tudor and Stuart Period, would be of very great value. So much of this kind of work involves a very wide acquaintance with the researches of others that any shortening of the labour involved is thoroughly justifiable, the more so as at this stage the boy should be a fluent Braille reader, and would, in any case, have ample Braille reading to do.

(b) What follows may appear to contradict what has been said before about the necessity for insisting on the learning of Braille, but I do not think it does. The case of the boy of, say, 15 to 18 who has lost his sight fairly suddenly,

deserves especial notice. In some respects, his case approximates to that of the adult who loses his sight, in that his mind is developed and capable of constant learning: in others, he resembles the child-blind, in that his sensitivity is not yet so far lost that he cannot hope to become a fluent Braille reader with real determination. It is therefore essential that such a boy should spend every possible effort on mastering Braille: but it is clearly criminal to starve his mind while teaching his fingers. And for such boys the Talking Book provides an unequalled medium for keeping alive interest in the world outside. For this purpose, the best sort of book seems to be the best works on current affairs, such as (for the present time) Douglas Reid's "Insanity Fair," E. H. Carr's "Twenty Years' Crisis," Seton Watson's "England and the Dictators": possibly these might be rather difficult for even the ablest boys, but at any rate there would be a better chance of that type of book being recorded, as there would be plenty of demand for it outside schools.

(c) There remain several other, so to speak, minor ways in which the Talking Book could be very useful. The very fact of listening to good reading is, indirectly, of great value: but I should like in particular to have some good anthology of poetry recorded; so few of us can read poetry at all intelligibly. But I foresee difficulties in selecting a group of works that could be read one after the other without producing a sort of spiritual or artistic indigestion in the mind of the listener. Again, a limited number of records which could be read to shorthand pupils at selected speeds might be of some value, though to the teaching staff rather than the pupil, in that it is not always easy to find as much time for dictating to pupils as is desirable.

In conclusion, I would say, as a teacher at a secondary school, that, under proper safeguards, a Talking Book should be a standard part of school equipment, if and when the right type of works are recorded in sufficient numbers. At present, there seems to me to be such a disproportionately large number of works of the light fiction type that I think boys had much better read in Braille. Even so, I would not willingly part with the Talking Book that I have got for the sake of my late-starters with Braille; but if it were possible to expand the Talking Book Library along the lines which I have suggested, its value in schools could be more than doubled, for it would have not merely a recreative but also an educational value of great possibilities.

B. O. B.

WE have been using the Talking Book in this school for many years and have derived great benefit from it. It is a matter of personal experience that blind boys are good listeners. It may be that the shutting out of visual impressions renders it easier for them to concentrate on the sounds to which they are listening at the moment. In view of the quantity of "mechanised" music and speech poured out nowadays, it would seem to be a good thing that the boys should listen to some purpose, and on this ground alone the suggestions in *THE NEW BEACON* should be received with approval.

The early talks to schools which the B.B.C. gave us did not pretend to introduce any local colour or atmosphere of any kind. They were just plain "Talks." Gradually, however, the B.B.C. introduced dramatisation and various accompanying sound effects, which (again a matter of personal experience) excited a much more lively interest in the boys. The radio lessons became less "tabloid" in form and therefore more easily assimilated by the pupils. It would seem to be desirable to profit by this experience in the making of any records such as are suggested by the writer in *THE NEW BEACON*: the use of sound effects, local colour, atmosphere and dramatisation, rather than the crowding of the record with information as such.

There is one point with regard to local colour. This has been conveyed on occasion by the B.B.C. naturally by the use of dialect. It was found that, in many cases, the use of dialect rendered the speech unintelligible. Not that it should be discarded entirely, but a vague "roughening" of the speech would suit the purpose.

The grading of the records in difficulty (to suit different ages) would seem to present some problems. It will vary perhaps, mainly with the subject matter contained, the method of presentation, the amount of dramatisation and vocabulary. The last is a very important item.

Some suggestions for the subjects of records are as follows. A series on industries of various

kinds would help greatly in the teaching of geography and the fund of general information. Such could include talks about the cotton, woollen, and boot and shoe industries, with local colour afforded by the sound of machinery, etc.

Many teachers and children are now evacuated to the country and have a first-class opportunity of studying birds and animals at first hand. This would be greatly stimulated by records of bird calls and animal sounds. There is a splendid series of Nature Talks from a Northern Station of the B.B.C. called "Out with Romans." Recorded talks of this kind would serve as an admirable model.

In close relation to the last series it would be helpful to have a number of records illustrating the various occupations followed in the country. These could be arranged and tabulated on a seasonal basis, and could be followed by the pupils at the appropriate time. The talks could be compared with actual observation, and slight variations noted and explained whenever possible. Such occupations on the farm as ploughing, hay-making, harvesting, threshing, etc., are examples.

Another series connected with outdoor life now open to so many town children would include simple lessons in geology and its applications. Such a series could include talks about a chalk pit, a stone quarry, lime-burning: a visit to a cement works. Simple records would illustrate the deposit of sediment in water, the erosion of land by sea and river, and so on.

In the field of history there are ample opportunities for rendering historic events more vivid, particularly to the older children. The "Dramatic Interludes" arranged for the B.B.C. by Rhoda Power are excellent models.

The above are only a few ways in which the Talking Book could be used. We feel that the suggested extension of the range of this apparatus should meet with the unqualified approval and support of the teachers of the blind.

R. PEPPITT.

WM. R. PLEAR.

Linden Lodge School for the Blind.

COMMENTS ON MR. DRIVER'S SUGGESTIONS

THE interesting and stimulating article contributed to the April issue of *THE NEW BEACON* by Mr. H. R. Driver has suggested some comments which I have arranged for clearness and brevity under the following headings:—

Braille Encyclopædia.—I await with interest the forthcoming article on this subject, and at present merely express the opinion that,

although an encyclopædia would doubtless be a source of interest, pleasure and profit to many readers, a much more urgent need in our schools is a wider choice of suitable School Texts in Braille.

Talking Book.—I share Mr. Driver's appreciation of the B.B.C.'s Broadcasts to Schools. At the time of our second evacuation we were following these wherever possible in the time-table

of our Junior School with such good results that we shall certainly resume listening to these Talks when the Junior School re-assembles. As Mr. Driver says, formal lessons in geography and history are filled with fresh meaning and interest when illustrated by plays, eye-witness accounts and travellers' talks. These features are to be welcomed in the education of all children whether sighted or blind, but I think they are particularly beneficial in the case of the latter, as they compensate for the loss of the many excellent pictorial illustrations to be found in most up-to-date school books. The inclusion of the Broadcasts to Schools within the timetable does, however, present considerable difficulty in that the syllabus of prescribed work for any particular term may—and often does—have little or nothing in common with that of the broadcasts. Our own experience has been that the Talks are so good and so generally liked by the children that it has been well worth while to meet this difficulty by various compromises, which do not concern us here, but a difficulty it is, and one which would disappear if we could enjoy the happy conditions of which Mr. Driver dreams, in which each school would have its library of recorded broadcast talks from which selections would be made by the teacher to meet the requirements of his syllabus. Such a happy prospect would rejoice the hearts of enthusiastic teachers in even the most advanced and well endowed sighted schools. Although I see no reason why schools for the blind should not keep pace with the best sighted schools in educational practice, I fear that most of us teachers of the blind must admit that there are many difficulties yet to be surmounted before we can honestly claim to do so.

What a fine thing it would be if Mr. Driver's dream could come true, and if blind schools could take the lead in this particular through the development of the Talking Book!

Object Lessons.—The School Museum is quite a popular institution, but it is rarely of much practical value to the teacher, as its collections and exhibits usually throw more light on the hobbies and interests of generous donors than on the syllabus which the museum should illustrate. Schools for the Blind seem no better if no worse than other schools in this respect, and my own experience leads me to believe that Mr. Driver is wildly optimistic in his supposition that "our schools have models of anything from animals and birds to ships and locomotives." I am convinced that every blind school should have such a collection, and to its absence, rather than to lack of interest or care on the part of the teacher, I must ascribe the preponderantly verbal teaching which is often and rightly criticised.

Children delight to play with models, and from these toys they learn much that cannot easily be conveyed by words or even by pictures. In the formal education of seeing children, however, the purpose of the model is usually to supplement the use of pictures, but in the education of blind children, models have to take the place of the wide range of excellent pictures which are part of the equipment of every good school. No school for the blind with which I am acquainted has a collection of models approaching such pictures in range and interest, and, when we remember that the teacher of seeing children can, and usually does, easily supplement the school collection by cuttings from the pictorial press, the relative disadvantage under which our blind children learn becomes still more pronounced. This disadvantage is one which is tolerated, in my opinion, for three main reasons. These are that models are much more expensive than pictures, that they are more difficult to store, and that there is no source of supply comparable with the educational publishing houses from whose comprehensive catalogues the busy teacher may quickly select the pictures he requires. These admitted difficulties do not, in my opinion, offer sufficient excuse for an inadequate educational practice which each school should do its utmost to improve by the liberal expenditure of money and ingenuity until it possesses literally thousands of models carefully collected and classified for the progressive illustration of its syllabus. The present unhappy times, in which so many schools are working in cramped conditions and under all kinds of unusual difficulties, do not provide much opportunity to work towards this ideal, but I feel strongly that its realisation should be made one of the definite aims of reorganisation after the War.

Achievement of the Blind.—Mr. Driver observes that people in general often show lack of confidence in the ability of blind people to do things. I agree with him that the public are not sufficiently well-informed of the abilities and achievements of the blind. I think that this is largely because blind people, and particularly those of educable and employable age, form such a small proportion of the total population that the majority number no blind men and women among their acquaintances. It is therefore true, as Mr. Driver suggests, that the full enjoyment of social life is not only of benefit to the blind individual, but is also of indirect advantage to the interests of the blind in general. Because of the numerical factor which I have already mentioned, however, I do not think this indirect propaganda is sufficient, and I think that every use should be made of the machinery of modern publicity to advertise the competence and achievements of the blind, particularly in

those occupations in which numbers of blind people are employed. I am aware that much is already done in this way, but I should like to see a different, and to my mind, a more generally helpful emphasis. As it is, one frequently reads Press reports of the examination success or appointment of a blind person in which the suggestion is implied that the particular achievement is altogether outstanding and unusual. It is a great achievement for a man or woman to overcome a serious handicap so successfully, but the interests of the blind would be promoted if the reader were informed at the same time that such success in overcoming the limitations of blindness was by no means uncommon.

In addition to what may be described as "undirected" publicity, I think that much may be done to inform and interest certain influential sections of the community by the method of direct approach. As an example of this I may mention the attempt to secure employment for blind typists through the agency of Rotary Clubs in the London area with whose whole-hearted co-operation I had worked out a promising scheme which should have begun to work just when the outbreak of war created such unusual conditions that it had to be abandoned.

There are doubtless many such plans which must remain in abeyance at a time when our energies and resources are so largely concerned with the bare task of carrying on our existing services, but it is altogether desirable that there should be constructive thinking and exchange of views in anticipation of the dawn of a brighter day.

J. N. LANGDON.

Royal Normal College for the Blind.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

New York Association for the Blind.—Few Annual Reports use photography more skilfully than this Association, and the fifty pictures that illustrate this year's story make it a vivid and interesting narrative. Especially effective are the four pictures entitled "How the Blind produce a Play," showing first a little group of blind people making their selection of a play, then the same group at work transcribing it into Braille, then the players at work on their parts, and finally, a scene from the play itself. The main activities of the Association include a Department for Prevention of Blindness, home nursing by three registered nurses, visits and

home teaching of the aged, a holiday home camps for boys and girls, a nursery school, the employment of the blind in workshops and in their own homes, magazine production and social activities of all kinds. The story of recreational activities is specially interesting; for it includes classes for pottery and modelling, a Beauty Clinic, weekly talks on national and international affairs, home nursing, cooking, sewing, dancing (studied by nearly 300 pupils), and a Red Cross group that "does its bit for British women and children." The coloured blind are not forgotten, and there is a special coloured staff worker, who, partially blind himself, does much to bring cheer into the homes of those he visits.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Curate's Wonderful Work.—Week after week, blitz or no blitz, the Rev. Griffiths Pugh Jones, a blind London curate, takes a shelter service in the crypt of St. Mark's, Kennington.

The vicar's wife, Mrs. Darlington, told a Press reporter: "Mr. Pugh Jones refuses to leave the Parish. He does wonderful work and has been a great help to my husband. He is continually visiting and helping bombed people."

Mr. Pugh Jones came to London three years ago from a village in Wales. He is 32.

Dolls for the Queen.—For the second time, dolls dressed by Miss Mary Payne, a blind lady of St. Raphael's Home, St. Albans, have been accepted by Her Majesty the Queen. Recently she dressed two dolls, one as a baby and the other as a schoolgirl, which were included in a collection sent by the Hertfordshire Society for the Blind to Buckingham Palace for the Queen's inspection. The Queen bought all the dolls, which she thought most attractive.

PERSONALIA

MR. R. J. SMITH, A.C.C.S., Organising Secretary of the Home Teaching Society for the Blind in Newcastle and Gateshead, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, has relinquished his post in order to join the Royal Air Force. Arrangements have been made for his assistant, MISS P. WANLESS, to carry on in his absence.

* * *

On Trinity Sunday, June 8th, MR. JOHN SHEPHEARD-WALWYN was ordained Deacon at the Ordination of the Lord Bishop of Rochester.

He is the son of a clergyman and was educated at Worcester College for the Blind, Oxford University and Wells Theological College.

* * *

MISS WHISTON has resigned the Chairmanship of the Macclesfield Society for the Blind, a position she has held since 1919. At the annual meeting of the Society, her successor, MRS. DEBENHAM, referred in appreciative terms to the long and useful service given by Miss Whiston to the Society, of which she has been a member for fifty years.

* * *

MR. MILES PRIESTLEY, at one time H.M. Inspector for Blind Welfare and formerly Superintendent of the Royal Midland Institution for the Blind, Nottingham, has recently had an eye operation for glaucoma. It was successful, and all Mr. Priestley's innumerable friends will rejoice to know that the sight is gradually being restored, and will join us in wishing him a speedy recovery.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices given are net prices and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production. They are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dances:	s.	d.
18345 Churchill, S., and Oliver, V. I Give You my Heart, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18346 Hunter, R., and Charles, C. The King is Still in London, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18347 Wallace, R. All the Best, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18348 Sherwin, M. The Little Boy Who Never Told a Lie, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6

Military March:

18143 Nowowieski, F. Under Freedom's Flag	0	6
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MOON BOOKS.

4426-30 The Sunshine Stealer, by B. Ruck. (Limited Edition).	5 vols.
4431-8 The Hopkins Manuscript, by Sherriff. (Limited Edition).	8 vols.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Biography:	Vols.
Chamberlain, Joseph, by W. F. Petrie ..	1
Scott, Captain, by Stephen Gwynn ..	3
English Literature:	
Arnold, Matthew. Culture and Anarchy ..	4
Pritchard, F. H. Essentials of Modern English	5
History:	
Hall, John. England and the Orleans Monarchy	7
Law:	
Dicey, A. V. Law of the Constitution. ed. Wade, 1931	12

Miscellaneous:

	Vols.
Cromer, Ruby. Such were these Years ..	4
Gorki, Maxim. Fragments from my Diary ..	4
Lindsay, Martin. Those Greenland Days. (British Arctic Air-route Expedition, 1930-31)	3
Morton, H. V. In Search of Scotland ..	5
Storrs, Ronald. Lawrence of Arabia, Zionism and Palestine	2
Werth, Alexander. Last Days of Paris ..	3

Poetry and Drama:

Bridie, James. Tobias and the Angel ..	2
Sayers, Dorothy L. Zeal of Thy House ..	1

Political:

Beals, Carlton. Coming Struggle for Latin America	6
East, Gordon. Mediterranean Problems ..	2
Fischer, Louis. Stalin and Hitler ..	1
Lindsay, A. D. I believe in Democracy (Broadcast Talks)	1

Theology and Religions:

Hadham, John. God in a World at War ..	2
Weatherhead, Leslie D. This is the Victory ..	3

MANUSCRIPT MUSIC LIBRARY.

Piano:

Beethoven. Thirty-three Variations on a Valse of Diabelli (563).	
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Piano and Orchestra:

Saint-Saëns. 2nd Concerto in G minor. Piano Solo (564). Orchestral Part (565).	
Chopin. Grand Concerto in E minor, Op. 11. Piano Solo (566). Orchestral Part (567).	

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

ADDITIONS.

Fiction:

	Vols.
Adams, Herbert. Case of the Stolen Bridegroom	3
Arnim, Countess von. Mr. Skeffington ..	4
Ayres, Ruby M. Silver Wedding	3
Ayres, Ruby M. There was Another	3
Barry, Charles. Death of a First Mate ..	4
Beeding, F. Ten Holy Horrors	4
Birmingham, G. A. Appeasement	4
Boileau, Ethel. Ballade in G minor (Sequel to Turnip Tops)	5
Bloom, Ursula. Golden Venture	4
Bone, Florence. Time in Flower	9
Boutell, Anita. Tell Death to Wait	2
Brand, Max. Poker Face	4
Brand, Max. Singing Guns	4
Bridges, Victor. Seven Stars	4
Buck, Pearl. Fighting Angel	4
Caldwell, Taylor. Dynasty of Death	17
Carr, J. Dickson. Crooked Hinge	4
Charteris, Leslie. Enter the Saint	4
Cole, G. D. H. and M. Double Blackmail ..	4
Coward, Noel. To Step Aside (Short Stories) ..	4
Cox, Lewis. Ladyfair	4
Crofts, F. Wills. Fatal Venture	4
Dyer, George. Mystery of Martha's Vineyard ..	4
Farnol, Jeffery. Pageant of Victory	6
Ferguson, Rachel. Alas! Poor Lady	6
Forester, C. S. Gun, The	3
Giffard, Lady Evelyn. My Katie Greets You. (Story of Katharina, wife of Martin Luther) ..	4
Gregory, Jackson. Powder Smoke	3
Greig, Maysie. Young Man Without Money ..	3
Hutchinson, A. S. M. Uncertain Trumpet ..	6
Jacob, Naomi. Straws in Amber	6
Kaye-Smith, Sheila. Ember Lane: A Winter's Tale	5
Kaye-Smith, Sheila. Faithful Stranger and Other Stories	4

Vols.

Marsh, Ngaio. Overture to Death	5
Marston, Jeffery. Rocket, The	5
Mitchison, Naomi. Blood of the Martyrs ..	7
*Newman, Bernard. Death to the Spy	3
Norris, Kathleen. Runaway, The	5
Pedler, M. Blind Loyalty	4
Raine, Macleod. Run of the Brush	4
Roan, Tom. Roaring Frontier	3
Rodney, George B. Frontier Justice	3
Sabatini, R. Marquis of Carabas	5
Schmidtman, Waldemar. Devil: The Life Story of a Chamois in the Austrian Alps ..	2
Simenon, Georges. Maigret Abroad	4
Simenon, Georges. Maigret to the Rescue ..	4
Simenon, Georges. Maigret Travels South ..	4
Simenon, Georges. Patience of Maigret ..	4
Somerville, E. O. and M. Ross. Sarah's Youth	4
Royde-Smith, Naomi. Altar Piece (An Edwardian Mystery)	4
Sprigg, C. St. John. Death of a Queen	4
Stafford, Ann. It Couldn't Happen to Us ..	5
Strong, L. A. G. They Went to the Island ..	3
Thirkell, Angela. Before Lunch	4
Tunstall, Beatrice. The Dark Lady	4
Vare, Daniele. Temple of Costly Experience ..	4
Wallace, Edgar. Golden Hades	2
Walpole, Hugh. Head in Green Bronze, and Other Stories	5
Wheatley, Dennis. Faked Passport	8

Miscellaneous:

Baerlein, Henry. No Longer Poles Apart (Poland 1936)	5
Ballard, F. H., and Others. Things Which Cannot Be Shaken (Sermons for Wartime) ..	1
Belloc, Hilaire. Characters of the Reformation	4
Benson, Sir Frank. My Memoirs (Published 1930)	5
Birkenhead, First Earl of. Famous Trials ..	9
Blunt, Rev. A. W. F. Our Need for God	2
Boone, J. Allen. Letters to Strongheart	3
Buchan, John. Memory Hold-the-Door (E. W. Austin Memorial)	5
†Carey, Rt. Rev. Wm. Thinking Straight about this War	1
†Considine, Rev. D. and Fr. Valentine. Loving God, with How to Make Mental Prayer ..	1
Crowther, J. G. Science and Life	2
Dent, Edward J. Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924)	5
Desmond, Shaw. Drama of the Sinn Fein ..	8
Dove, Capt. Patrick. I Was Graf Spee's Prisoner	2
†Elphick, Wm. Secret of Happiness and Some Studies in the Christian Religion	2
Garnett, D. Letters of T. E. Lawrence	15
Gee, H. L. Don't Lose Heart	1
Goard, Rev. Wm. Pascoe. Law of the Lord or Common Law	2
†Green, Rev. Peter. Gospel Story (Short Life of Christ)	1
Hamilton, Sir Ian. When I Was a Boy	4
†Harton, Sibyl. Practice of Intercession	2
*Hudson, W. H. Outline History of English Literature	4
Joad, C. E. M. Testament of Joad	5
Jones, E. Stanley. Along the Indian Road ..	4
Kolb, Annette. Mozart	5
†Lloyd, Canon Roger. Revolutionary Religion: Christianity, Fascism and Communism ..	3
Mackenzie, C. Musical Chairs	5
Maine, Basil. Franklin Roosevelt	4
Marston, Sir Charles. Bible Comes Alive ..	4
Modern Verse, Book of (Zodiac Books 1939) ..	1

Vols.

†Murry, J. Middleton. Europe in Travail (Published 1940)	1
Nicolson, H. Why Britain is at War (1939) ..	2
Pegler, H. S. Holmes. Goatkeeping for Amateurs	2
*Poems, Book of, for the Present Time, by Living English Poets	1
Priestley, J. B. Rain Upon Godshill (Further Chapter of Autobiography)	4
Raven-Hart, Major R. Canoe Errant on the Nile (1935-36)	3
Reid, J. W. Pigkeeping from "Country Life"	1
Rogerson, Sidney. Old Enchantment	2
Slocombe, George. History of Poland (From Earliest Times to 1939)	5
Smythe, Frank. Adventures of a Mountaineer	3
*Thompson, C. J. S. Lure and Romance of Alchemy	3
Turgenev, Ivan S. Month in the Country (A Play)	2
Wavell, General Sir A. Generals and Generalship	1
Weatherhead, L. D. Thinking Aloud in Wartime	2
Wilson, P. W. The General (Work of General Evangeline Booth)	2

Juvenile:

Brereton, Lt.-Col. F. S. With Allenby in Palestine	3
Burglon, Nora. Deep Silver	3
Christian, Catherine. Marigolds Make Good ..	3
Kaeser, H. J. Mimff	2
Moore, Una K. Year and a Day	3

Grade 1:

Selected Stories from Argosy Magazine. June, 1940	1
Selected Short Stories from Good Housekeeping and Nash's Magazine	1

Moon:

Birmingham, G. A. Magilligan Strand	5
Brand, Max. Gunman's Gold	5
Carr, J. Dickson. Burning Court	5
Douglas, Lloyd. Disputed Passage	9
"Grey Owl." The Tree	1
Hardy, Thomas. Woodlanders	8
Jones, E. Stanley. Along the Indian Road ..	5
Masefield, J. Dead Ned	5
Ruck, Berta. Sunshine Stealer	5

* Machine Transcribed Books.

† Gifts from Guild of Church Brailleists.

‡ Gifts from St. Cecilia's Guild.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

31st May, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	7
(Five applications under consideration)	
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	—
Wavertree House, Hove.	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea ..	—
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring ..	—
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay ..	—
(Applications for admission can now be received)	

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

TO BRAILLE ENTHUSIASTS.

Become word perfect. Equip yourself with notes clarifying the rules relating to lower sign contractions (Grade II). Apply for particulars to H. N. Vickerstaff (address as opposite). enclosing stamp.

A Budget of Good Holiday Reading for 3d. Copies of the N.I.B. Summer Annual (stories, light articles, jokes, etc.) for 1940 can now be obtained at half-price, 3d. net. Order now before stock is exhausted, quoting catalogue No. 18192, from National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland St., W.1.

TYPEWRITERS WANTED : The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland St., London, W.1, requires typewriters, particularly for the instruction and use of newly blinded people, and will offer reasonable prices for up-to-date second-hand machines in good working order. Please send full particulars.

"WHAT TO DO ABOUT GAS."

This leaflet, issued by the Ministry of Home Security, has been published in Braille by the National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W. 1. It was issued as a Supplement to the *National Braille Mail*, but single copies can be obtained, free of charge, by any blind person on application to the Institute.

WANTED: COPIES OF LETTERPRESS BOOKS ON BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, offers the original price of 2s. 6d. each for clean copies of the letterpress editions of *Key to the Braille Music Notation*, 1922 (Catalogue No. 6673), and *Elementary Lessons and Exercises in the Revised (1922) Braille Music Notation*, by Watson (Catalogue No. 7351).

N.I.B. ENVELOPE ECONOMY LABELS.

Old envelopes can be used several times for correspondence if they are sealed with the N.I.B. Economy Label. This gummed label provides ample space for a written or typed address, and the turn-over which falls across the top of the envelope at the back bears the words: "National Institute for the Blind Economy Label; Work for the Blind must go on: They need your help more than ever."

Blind customers can be supplied with these labels for use with ordinary correspondence (not Braille letters) at the rate of 100 for 6d., plus 2d. postage. Apply National Institute for the Blind, 224-6-8, Gt. Portland St., London, W.1.

HAVE YOU ANY BRAILLE BOOKS YOU WISH TO DISPOSE OF?

Probably many Braille readers possess a number of Braille Editions of standard works which they have finished with and which they would like to sell if they could find customers. With a view to effecting Sales direct from the present owners to would-be purchasers, the National Institute proposes to compile a list of disposable books in private possession. Will readers therefore send to the Editor the titles and authors of the books they wish to dispose of, with name and address of sender. The list, when completed, will be made available to Braille readers and so enable them to get into direct touch with the owners of disposable books and arrange a purchase.

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind: Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

HOMES FOR THE BLIND, FULWOOD, PRESTON.

Wanted, Resident **Head Master** (unmarried) with necessary qualifications required by the Board of Education as Head Teacher of a School for the Blind. Salary in accordance with Burnham Scale Grade II, Scale III. Applications, stating age, experience, qualifications, accompanied by testimonials, to be sent before 27th June to the Superintendent.

MISSION TO THE OUTDOOR BLIND FOR GLASGOW AND WEST OF SCOTLAND.

Applications are invited for the post of Home Teacher of the Blind for the Lanarkshire district of the above Mission. Candidates should preferably hold the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. The commencing salary, if qualified, is £160 per annum. Applications stating age, experience, and qualifications, with copies of recent testimonials, should be sent to Laurence R. Brown, Esq., LL.B., Hon. Secretary, 201, Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Blind Persons Acts, 1920 and 1938. APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the appointment of a sighted female Home Teacher for the Blind (under 40 years of age), to visit blind persons in the Administrative County Area adjacent to Liverpool and Southport.

The salary will be £130 per annum (plus cost of living bonus of 6 per cent.), if uncertificated, and £156 per annum (plus cost of living bonus of 6 per cent.), if certificated; together with travelling expenses and subsistence allowances according to the County Council scale.

The successful applicant will be required to reside in or near Liverpool pass a medical examination, and to contribute to the Local Government and other Officers' Superannuation Act.

The appointment will be subject to one month's notice by either side.

Applications stating age, qualifications, experience, where now employed and if in possession of the Home Teachers' Certificate, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, must be forwarded so as to be received by the County Medical Officer of Health, County Offices, Preston, not later than Saturday, the 5th July, 1941.

GEORGE ETHERTON,

Clerk of the County Council.

County Offices,
Preston.

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OF THE BLIND

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EVACUATION—AN ADVENTURE

By EDWARD EVANS, M.R.S.T.

FROM time to time we have read in THE NEW BEACON the announcement that such and such a school for the blind has been evacuated from its own home in a vulnerable area to a supposedly safer locality. The general body of the press has devoted considerable attention to the problems associated with the evacuation of the normal school population, and there have been discussions on the wireless on the social disturbances consequent on the removal of large numbers of the community from their own homes to settle down in other places.

As yet little has been said in detail about the difficulties encountered by the larger residential special schools in finding new accommodation and the consequential effects in uprooting old established institutions from their own premises and placing them in entirely new surroundings. Evacuation, and how easily the word, with its new specialised meaning, has slipped into our vocabulary, has so many different implications. At its best it can mean only a shifting of living quarters, often to the advantage in social amenities, of the evacuee. This is especially true in the case of debilitated children sent from the slum areas of large towns to rural areas where the reception is well and sympathetically administered. In the case of the removal of family units, with the sharing of small houses, temperamental incompatibilities have done much to make for strain and discomfort, so much so, that there has been a considerable backward flow to the evacuated areas.

The case of the residential special schools falls into a somewhat unique category. The whole approach to the problem differs from that of the evacuation of the normal schools in fundamentals. If I give the experiences of our own school in dealing with this problem it is because it is typical of many of the others in the same case.

Most readers of this journal will be acquainted with the services rendered by a residential school for the blind, with the special technique employed in their education and with the highly specialised equipment used in the classrooms, workshops and homes. Schools for the deaf, in their own way, are equally well fitted out.

It would be as well to give a short description of the provisions made in our school to carry on the normal working.

The East Anglian Schools for Blind and Deaf Children are situated at Gorleston-on-Sea; they occupy with the playing fields and gardens about 16 acres of space, and are the most easterly of all the special schools. They are designed in the modern style of one storey buildings and comprise seven homes, classrooms, gymnasium, kindergarten department, workshops, laundry, two hospitals, domestic science house, and central kitchens, together with the usual stores, staff rooms and out-buildings. The grounds are provided with recreational apparatus of all kinds, with a sports pavilion, pets' corner, swimming pool and a building housing the several youth organisations connected with the schools. The furnishings of the buildings, apart from domestic amenities and the usual classroom fittings, include every technical device used in the education of the special types of child for whom we cater, from the talking book and the talking cinema for the blind to the silent cinema and the latest aural aids for the deaf.

It will be seen that if the specialised education of these children was to be continued, much more than the ordinary arrangements had to be made. Evacuation for us meant much more than securing billets in a reception area and placing the children in the nearest primary or secondary school. Education policy has been directed for many years past to removing defective children from the normal schools and providing for them the special type of education suited to their needs.

It was necessary, therefore, to remove the schools as a whole, taking with us as much of the equipment as possible. We sought to secure accommodation in premises sufficiently extensive to provide for the domestic requirements of the children and staff, and also with sufficient space for classrooms, workrooms and recreational facilities.

We began our search as soon as it became clear in June, 1940, that certain East Coast districts were to be added to the schedule of evacuation areas.

As most of our children are recruited from East Anglia it was hoped to find suitable premises in the Eastern Counties, and with this object an extensive search was made there. The essential requirements were, sufficient room to house about 220 people, adequate water supply, lighting, sanitary accommodation, cooking facilities and room for our classes in school and workshop. All the large houses we saw fell alarmingly short in these particulars or if they were suitable had already been taken over by Government Departments for various purposes.

After the occupation of the Low Countries and the collapse of France, there was an enormously increased demand from the new evacuation areas for large buildings in the reception districts, and in this scramble we were one of many schools, institutions and offices similarly seeking a new home.

After many disappointments and with increasing anxiety we were put in contact with the Welsh Board of Health whose officers spared no pains to help us. Eventually we were able to secure Aberpergwm House, together with a smaller house less than a mile from it, Maesyffynon, situated in the charming Vale of Neath and near the mining village of Glyn Neath. These properties had been placed at the disposal of the Government through the generosity of their owner, Mr. Godfrey Williams. They had not been occupied for many years and were packed with rare and costly furniture, for the storage of which we had to make immediate provision.

It was clear that a great deal of alteration had to be made to Aberpergwm to make it suitable for our needs.

It would be tedious to give a long description of the trials and vicissitudes through which we passed. The adaptation of the buildings, the provision of sanitary and cooking facilities, the transport of our goods and chattels, the constant improvisations were all encountered with a desire to make the best of things. At last, after some months, we became tolerably straightened out or, at least, we had adapted ourselves to our new conditions.

I am more concerned to attempt an appraisal of the effects of evacuation upon us as an educational and social establishment.

The change from one of the best equipped special schools in the country, and this is no idle claim, to premises which with all the adaptations made can only be described as a handsome house, is bound to have affected the organisation, curriculum and particularly the general amenities available for the children. The loss of our laundry, hospitals, vegetable gardens and other services has imposed a severe strain on the domestic department. We have no gymnasium, swimming pool nor playing fields. The smaller of the two houses, Maesyffynon, having been found unsuitable for residential purposes, has been used as a school, while we use Aberpergwm House as our home.

The loss in efficiency may be summarised thus: We have lost ground in formal education. This does not unduly perturb me personally, I am the most informal of schoolmasters. We have poor facilities for domestic science training, we have none for dressmaking. These two are of particular value to our deaf children. Physical

training in its more formal aspect has suffered. We were doing fine work in swimming; much of that training has had to be curtailed. The classes have had to manage in smaller rooms and sometimes even in cramped conditions. The domestic comforts are not comparable with those we have left, but few of us are the worse for that. The great distance from their homes and consequent separation from friends has no doubt affected the more emotional of our children. The strain becomes apparent when the normal schools in the district take holidays while we remain at work. In handwork we have had to adapt ourselves to lack of space, loss of instructors and the difficulty of securing materials, but I imagine we should have been placed in similar difficulties had we stayed at home.

Our greatest worry is in dealing with sickness, as when we had an epidemic of measles in January, owing to the little reserve space available for sickroom accommodation. This lack of space acts with some gravity in the allocation of room for purely recreational pursuits and on wet days. A typical wet day in our valley is something not easily forgotten; when the children have to remain indoors, they tend to become wearied and fretful.

Are there any compensations? There are indeed. In the first place we have tremendously extended the experience of the children. Most of them had never seen a mountain before, nor a waterfall, nor torrents tumbling down the hillside, nor the wonderful caves extending

underground for miles, nor a coal mine (some of our elder boys went through a mine), nor many new natural features of a countryside that differs so much from their own.

We have been able to meet a kindly and hospitable people who have embarrassed us with their good will. We are invited to a special performance weekly at the Miners' Welfare Cinema; concert parties and choirs visit us to entertain us; we bath twice a week at the magnificent pit head baths at Glyn Neath as guests of the Miners' Welfare Association; the local churches invite us to their young peoples' meetings. These are but a few of the friendly contacts we have been able to make. The children now have to leave home to attend school, just like normal children; we meet people we know on the way and there is always a cheery greeting from someone.

We have become much less institutional even among ourselves, the boys and girls have to share amenities that were once reserved for each, the two schools have to mix more for games and sometimes for lessons too, particularly in handwork.

Above all and justifying everything, we have been safe. Events have proved that we could never have carried on in our own buildings.

My own feeling is that this adventure, for such it is, has been on the whole a useful experience. And having said that, I hope it won't last too long.

HOME NEWS

Conference of Home Teachers at York.—An outstandingly successful Conference was convened by the Northern Counties Association for the Blind at York on May 22, under the chairmanship of Councillor Clydesdale. Reference was made by the Chairman in addressing those present to the grievous loss the profession had suffered in the death of Mr. Siddall, whose connection with home teaching was of long standing and whose personal friendship many of his hearers had enjoyed. At the morning session papers were read on the work of a home teacher in war time, Mrs. Jones (Leeds) dealing with work in urban areas and Miss Evans (York) with the problems of the country. At the afternoon meeting Miss I. Rumney (Northumberland) read a paper entitled "Home Teachers—What of the Future?" All three papers were most valuable contributions, and we hope at some later date to have an opportunity of summarising them in our

columns. They are evidence of the growingly important part the home teaching service is playing in the scheme of blind welfare in this country.

Bognor's Blind Spitfire Contribution.—The blind of Bognor Regis and the surrounding district made a magnificent contribution towards the national effort for the purchase of Spitfires at a Fête held on June 18th, at Denmead, one of the hostels established in Bognor for housing L.C.C. blind evacuees.

The Fête was opened by Lady Bessborough, who explained its object. It was a success from start to finish. Valuable assistance was given by Miss Ballantyne, Matron of the Hostel; Dr. H. M. Ayres, Medical Officer of Health for Bognor Regis; Home Teachers and Visitors, and Boy Scouts and Girl Guides of Bognor Regis. There were stalls where goods made by the blind were sold, and fancy dress dancing competitions;

tea was provided. An interesting display of books, maps and mechanical apparatus for the blind was lent by the National Institute for the Blind. When the final count was taken, it was found that more than £153 had been realised.

Possibly this fine example may influence other Blind Organisations to pursue a similar policy.

The Theological Times.—The Rev. A. M. Fairweather has been Honorary Editor of *The Theological Times*; the Braille magazine representative of all schools of thought in the Church, since its first number. But owing to his appointment to a Chaplaincy in His Majesty's Forces he has been obliged to relinquish his editorship. To part with his services so thoroughly and ably rendered, even for the duration of the war only, is a real loss, but fortunately the Rev. D. S. Robertson, Manse of Knockbain, Munlochy, Ross-shire, Scotland, has kindly taken on the part of Honorary Editor, and all correspondence should be addressed to him in future. It is certain that the paper will continue to fulfil its useful purpose under the editorship of Mr. Robertson.

Blind-made Basket brings in £100 for Rose Day.—Mrs. L. Morshead, organiser of Alexandra Rose Day, told a Press representative that one of their greatest attractions had been a beautiful rose basket wonderfully designed by the blind. She said that this was sold twelve times over and had brought in more than £100.

Gift of a Home for the North Wales Society for the Blind.—The late Mrs. K. M. Jones, widow of the late Dr. Peter Jones, Abergele, North Wales, after a lifelong interest in the welfare of the blind, has bequeathed to the North Wales Society for the Blind a house, Llys Onen, Abergele, which is in every way suitable for a home for blind people. The gift is a most timely one because two years ago the Society was anxiously exploring the possibility of establishing a Residential and Holiday Home for blind people on its register, and promising headway had been made—but then the war came and the project had to be postponed indefinitely.

Llys Onen is centrally situated for the area on a part of the North Wales coast known for its bracing air; it is commodious and well appointed and has extensive grounds. It is ideally suited for the purpose, and although its maintenance will be a costly item of annual expenditure, the Society has accepted the responsibility, trusting that the necessary financial backing will be forthcoming from those interested in the welfare of the blind of North Wales.

Turner House Entertainments.—On 28th June the residents at Turner House, the Church Army Hostel for the Blind, and one or two of their blind friends, gave an entertainment to an audience consisting of members of the local

parish, St. Mark's, Regent's Park. A small charge was made for admission, and the proceeds—amounting to £5 11s.—went towards the funds for rebuilding the church, which was destroyed during the severe raids last autumn. The concert consisted of songs, recitations, sketches, a pianoforte solo, a dance, and finally a cantata.

The entertainment was repeated on the following Wednesday, July 2nd, in aid of prisoners of war, and the amount collected was £4. The audience on this day consisted of friends.

Pension of Blind Leeds Man.—In the House of Commons, on 25th June, Mr. Lunn (Lab., Rothwell) asked the Minister of Health "if he is aware that a blind man, Thomas Haney, of 248 Sissons Road, Middleton, Leeds, who had a pension of 10s. a week and £1 13s. supplementary allowance, had the £1 13s. stopped by the Blind Authorities because his daughter, aged 19, who had £1 3s. a week, is now receiving £3 a week as a tram-car conductress, and if it is with his approval that the household means test is still in operation in blind cases."

Miss Horsbrugh, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, who replied, said that, subject to certain statutory provisions, the question of whether financial assistance should be granted to any blind person and, if so, the amount of the assistance, was decided by the local authority concerned under the scheme for the Blind Persons Acts, which was adopted in 1938, and did not require the approval of the Minister of Health. She understood that the withdrawal of assistance in the case to which Mr. Lunn referred was in accordance with this scheme.

Mr. Lunn: Are the whole of the blind persons in this country subjected to the household means test, and if they are, is the Minister of Health responsible or the local authority which is concerned?

Miss Horsbrugh replied that the Blind Persons Acts were administered by the local authorities under a separate scheme from the ordinary Old Age and Widows' Pensions Act.

Mr. Lunn: Is it not time it was abolished by the Ministry?

Miss Horsbrugh said that if Mr. Lunn looked into the scheme he would see what the differences were between it and the old age and widows' pensions scheme.

Mr. George Griffiths (Lab., Hemsworth): Then the Ministry has nothing whatever to do with the stoppage of this blind person's pension?

Miss Horsbrugh: Nothing whatever.

Greater London Fund Annual Sisterhood Meeting.—For the nineteenth year in succession Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., presided on June 19th over the annual meeting of women members of Sisterhoods and

other kindred meetings attached to religious bodies, who help the Greater London Fund for the Blind.

For the first time the meeting was held in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, kindly placed at the disposal of the Fund by the Mayor of Westminster, and tea was served later in the Empire Restaurant at the A.B.C.—both changes necessitated by war conditions which proved very satisfactory.

Owing to the difficulty of making arrangements, the Mayor and several others, including Lady Fulton, who would have been present, were unable to attend; but Sir Beachcroft was supported by his niece, Miss Bertram, deputising as a member of the Ladies' Committee; the Mayor of Ealing; the Chairman of the Carshalton U.D.C.; Mr. H. J. Wagg (Honorary Treasurer of the Fund); Mrs. Morgan, of the Central Sisterhood Council; Mrs. Gibson (Rainham); Miss Achurch (Woolwich); Mrs. Mac-Millan (Essex County Association for the Blind); Mrs. Goodered (London Pastimes Club), and Miss Violet Vanbrugh, who presented the prizes.

The Tea Urn, awarded to the meeting collecting the largest sum on Geranium Day, was won for the third year by the Carshalton Women's Fellowship. Fifty-one articles made by the blind were also distributed to individual collectors of over £3. A special prize was awarded to the Purfleet Baptist Sisterhood.

Mr. H. J. Wagg expressed the thanks of the Committee to Miss Vanbrugh, Sir Beachcroft Towse, Mr. Fagge, and the artists, and to Miss Edith Edwards (Founder Organiser of the Sisterhood Appeal) who had come from the country specially to address the meeting.

Official Opening of America Lodge.—On Saturday, August 16th, Lord Mamhead will officially open "America Lodge," Middle Lincombe Road, Torquay, as one of the National Institute's Homes of Recovery for the War-Blinded. Capt. Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., the Institute's Chairman, will ask Lord Mamhead to express the Institute's thanks to the British War Relief Society of the United States of America for the generosity which has made possible the acquisition of this beautiful Home, and Mr. Bertram De N. Cruger, Chairman of the Society's Advisory Committee in London, who will be present with Mr. Gilbert H. Carr, will respond.

Owing to the difficulties of travelling and of finding accommodation, the National Institute is not issuing a general invitation to Societies for the Blind, but representatives of any Society will be cordially welcomed, and the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, will be glad to receive notification from those who intend to be present.

Consumer Rationing.—Immediately after the announcement by the Government of its decision to ration clothing, the National Institute for the Blind and the National Association of Workshops for the Blind made representations to the Board of Trade with a view to obtaining exemption from rationing of blind-made goods. The case advanced was that limitation of the sales of blind-made goods would result in the unemployment of blind persons whose labour could not readily or at all be transferred to munitions.

The Board of Trade responded sympathetically but regretted that it could not give an exemption, which would be felt as an injustice to traders.

A concession has been made, however. Under the provisions of the No. 2 Order dated 1st July, 1941, a fifth schedule has been added of Bodies to which traders are allowed to supply without the surrender of coupons. This schedule includes the following: Institutions who are members of the National Association of Workshops for the Blind, Inc., or of the Joint Industrial Advisory Committee for Scottish Institutions for the Blind. Blind Institutions and blind workers engaged in Home-workers' Schemes will, however, be required to collect the number of coupons proper to the garments sold, and these coupons will eventually have to be surrendered to the Board of Trade. It is hoped to be able to report more fully on this aspect of the case on receiving further instructions from the Board of Trade.

A Charming Essay from China.

"The Torch," an inkprint magazine giving details of the work of the Ming Sum School for the Blind, Canton, includes a composition by one of the younger forms, describing a visit to a British gunboat.

"The captain and men of the British gunboat invited our class and some little children and several teachers to their ship, the *Seamew*. We had a good time there. They taught us how to play on the seesaw and go down the steep slide. Also we heard some good music. We tried to play the concertina. We were surprised that we could play it. We felt many things, as guns, cannons, beds and paper decorations. After that they prepared a good party for us. We ate many kinds of sandwiches and cakes. At last they gave us all the paper decorations and flowers. They put the festoons around our necks and put flowers in our hair. We were very happy and gay."

It is good in these grim days to remember that British gunboats have their lighter moments.

THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

“THE Education of the Blind” (Harrap & Co., High Holborn, W.C.1, price 12s. 6d. net) is a study of methods of teaching the blind, edited by Dr. Merle Frampton, Principal of the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, and written by about fifty specialist members of the Institute’s staff. It is, therefore, less of an abstract dissertation treating of the psychology of the blind child, than a practical account of methods adopted by experienced teachers; as such it is valuable.

In the Foreword, Dr. Frampton draws attention to the fact that one point of view is held in common by all the contributors; it is that the blind child is a normal being, to whom in the main the methods of teaching the seeing apply, though the media of instruction may be different and special pains be taken to develop the senses other than sight as fully as possible. It is to this normality of the blind child that he attributes in part the lack of special treatises on methods of teaching the blind, though he characterises this scarcity of reliable material as “notable and tragic.” In his view, no important contribution (with the possible exception of Villey’s “Education des Aveugles”) has been made to the subject since the time of Haüy’s “Essai sur l’Education des Aveugles.” Rather surprisingly, no reference is made, either in the bibliography or in the Foreword, to the Report of the Joint Committee of the College of Teachers of the Blind and the National Institute for the Blind, published in 1934 under the title “The Education of the Blind,” and also although Dr. Frampton’s book does not confine itself to American publications, that the English “Teacher of the Blind” is not included in the list of professional periodicals, in spite of the fact that references to articles in it are included in the bibliography.

“Education of the Blind” is divided into five main sections:—

1. Guidance in Elementary Grades.
2. Enriching life in the Secondary School.
3. Music and the Blind.
4. Vocational and Pre-vocational Experiences.
5. Pathways to Abundant Living for the Blind Child.

Because the writers are concerned with practical questions, and do not stray into the regions of the psychology of the blind, there is not much that is controversial, and a good deal that is of practical interest. The vocabulary of the American educationist is, however, apt at times to be a little puzzling to English readers, and such a sentence as “The wholesome feeling-tone or systemic resonance produced by the

‘backlash’ of right conduct is an important outcome of such methods [i.e. methods requiring the exercise of the entire personality] and gives the word ‘integration’ its emotional colouring” is a bit beyond most of us. Such sentences, however, it is only fair to add, are rare, and most of the book is easily followed.

In the first sections, details are given on the teaching of Braille, both to the young child and also to the older newly-blind pupil, and useful games for the use of the teacher of little children are described. It is stressed that the teacher of Braille should not be doctrinaire about method, provided that really bad habits like scrubbing the dots are avoided, and that the child himself is often the best judge of the method that suits him. That he shall eventually read for information and pleasure is the teacher’s aim.

That “Geography is a human dynamic subject” is the opening phrase of the section on geography teaching, and is the keynote to the whole. It is interesting to be reminded that the American teacher of geography has one advantage over the English, in that the parents or grandparents of his pupils have often come from European countries, and the children are naturally eager to know something about the lands from which their forbears have come. In a study of Asia, we are reminded that “the United States, having the Pacific Ocean for its western boundary . . . must watch with considerable concern the development of events in Asia”; the words are even more apposite today than when they were penned a few months ago.

A chapter in the second section of the book deals with the general principles of good teaching, and though it is simply written it says much that is worth thinking about. The teacher must be marked by the qualities of humility, patience, justice and truthfulness, and only when he has these will “an uncourted quality, confidence, enter the classroom.” Little phrases from the chapter remain in one’s mind—“One’s being old is not a virtue, it is an experience.” “Justice gives a sense of proportion; that which is close at hand may become too significant.” These are words that all teachers may well ponder, lest they treat childish offences too portentously.

In a chapter on the teaching of English to older pupils, the value of Talking Books and wireless are both commented upon, and there are sections on choral speaking and acting. “Through the fun of dramatics, shy students may become confident . . . and speech defects may often be corrected. Pupils seem to acquire confidence, poise, good posture.”

The part of the book dealing with the musical

education of the blind is not, as its writer (the Director of the Institute's Music Department) admits, particularly optimistic. He regards the handicap of blindness as "extremely serious" to the person who contemplates music as a vocation, though he agrees that of all the subjects which the blind may study it ranks near the top. Singing is in his view one of the best lines for the blind to follow, though he agrees, that, despite difficulties, some blind men have done well as church organists; as concert organists he believes that they can compete successfully with the seeing.

The section of the book that deals with the vocational training of the blind is, for an English

reader, rather puzzling. The length of courses is short judged by our standards—a year for a pianoforte tuner as compared with the English four, a year for agriculture and poultry farming, a year for training as a motor mechanic; surely such courses are not regarded as fitting the pupil to be a wage-earner, and it seems more likely that they are pre-vocational. It is not, however, quite clear.

Teachers of blind children must often be conscious of the fact that little has been written on their special problems, and they will therefore welcome this volume in which practical men and women place their experience at the disposal of fellow-workers.

THE SHELTER

By The Rev. G. P. JONES:

Reference was made in the last issue of THE NEW BEACON to the shelter services taken by the Rev. G. P. Jones, a blind London curate. Mr. Jones here gives an impression of his experiences.

AS night falls, groups of people carrying bundles may be noticed making their way to underground shelter in our cities and towns.

These shelterers have always been brave, but there was a time when they were also pathetic, particularly the children and the aged. I shall never forget the first few weeks after the "blitz" started in London last September. At whatever time of the day I passed one of our tube stations there was quite a crowd of people outside (with the inevitable bundles) waiting for the time when they would be admitted to the shelter of the Underground.

All that was changed long ago. Every regular shelterer now has his or her ticket, and the conditions inside are infinitely better than they were.

It has been my fortune to minister once a week at Family Prayers in the crypt of a well-known South London church, which was put out of action some months ago. I was not in the crypt the night the Church was hit, but I have been told that every one of the 300 people there behaved wonderfully. There was no semblance of panic, and all were safely shepherded to other refuges.

Since then, of course, we have not had so many people, and numbers have declined still further of late owing to the lighter evenings. This decline in numbers has meant that it is now very much easier to get to know our visitors individually.

This is a poor parish, and none of our friends are well provided with this world's goods, but it is rather odd to find that they come to us not only from the immediate neighbourhood, but from further afield.

They are an odd assortment, some of them surprisingly refined, some of them definitely tough.

Someone once said (I can't remember who it was, but in any case it doesn't matter) that mankind is incurably religious. Certainly, appearances may very often be to the contrary and I know many people who will say with scorn "I have no use for that stuff," but they join in the hymn-singing and the prayers at our gatherings for worship. Some of them were not very keen about it at first, but very soon they expected it, and if they didn't get it would want to know the reason why.

Do they come to church? No, at least, not many of them. Perhaps they will one day, but I am not very hopeful about most of them.

Our services are very short, one or two hymns sung to an American organ, and one or two prayers commending our rulers, our friends and ourselves to God's care.

Apart from the services, we run a canteen. That has been much welcomed, though, of course, it is not wanted so much in the summer months.

There are advantages as well as disadvantages for the blind clergyman in dealing with these people. It is true that it often happens that the silent ones need help most, those who only show by their demeanour that they are in trouble, but there are also those who, in trouble themselves, feel that it is easy to talk to someone who suffers from a handicap, though his trouble is different from their own. I have talked with many people who, but for the fact that I am blind, would have said nothing. In the shelter they are particularly willing to talk and to minister to such is indeed a privilege.

SUPPLEMENTARY OLD AGE PENSIONS

By BEN PURSE

IF we may judge the position of the person who proposes to apply for a supplementary old age pension, it would appear that many non-seeing people still fail to grasp the fact that they are ineligible for this form of assistance under the new Act. We have previously reminded readers of this journal that this is so, and that the new legislation expressly excludes from its provisions blind persons and their dependants because their circumstances are provided for under other Acts of Parliament. It may be advisable, however, to deal with this matter of supplementary pensions, because home teachers and administrative officers are frequently requested to give advice on this and kindred subjects, and it is appropriate that they should be properly informed.

Any man or woman who is in receipt of an old age pension or any widow who has proved a title to the widow's pension may apply for additional assistance by way of supplementary pension if they are in needy circumstances, but it must be borne in mind that the criteria for granting such aid must always be proven need. If, however, a person has reached the appropriate age or is otherwise eligible either for the old age pension or the widows' pension, and who may find it necessary also to apply for a supplementary pension, such a person is entitled to do so at the same time that the application is made for the old age pension. It is not necessary for the wife of a pensioner to make a separate application so long as she is otherwise eligible, since provision is made under the Act for such a contingency. If a supplementary pension has already been granted, it is quite useless to make a further application unless the sum granted is below the statutory provision and the recipient is aggrieved by the decision.

Parliament has approved regulations for determining the amount of supplementary pension, and the following are examples of the usual amounts of such grants payable to a person who has nothing but his old age pension. If the applicant is living alone and is paying a rent of about 5s., the supplementary pension would usually be 9s. 6d. If he or she is living in someone else's household and has no dependants the supplementary grant would usually be 3s. 6d. for a man or 2s. 6d. for a woman, together with an additional sum not exceeding 5s. to enable the pensioner to contribute a fair share towards the rent. If the pensioner makes no payment for board and lodging, or if the householder is his son or daughter and has an income of at least

£6 a week, the pensioner may be regarded as not being in need of a supplementary grant. If a married couple (both pensioners) are living by themselves and paying a rent of about 6s. and have no resources other than their pensions, the amount of their joint supplementary pension will usually be 12s. If a pensioner has a dependant living with him, an addition will be made to the supplementary pension, the amount of which will be determined by the age and other circumstances of the dependant.

Where the pensioner (or the wife, husband or other dependant) has other resources either in the form of income or capital, these will be taken into account in deciding whether a supplementary pension is needed, and, if so, the amount thereof. Certain resources are disregarded either in part or wholly: these are the first 7s. 6d. of a superannuation payment, the first 5s. of Friendly Society sick pay, the first 20s. of a disability pension, one-half of any weekly payment or workmen's compensation, the capital value of the house in which the pensioner lives, and the first £375 of War Savings. (To qualify as "War Savings," money must *since* 2nd September, 1939, either have been invested in Government securities issued since that date, e.g., 3 per cent. Defence Bonds, or in National Savings Certificates, or have been deposited in the Post Office or a Trustee Savings Bank. Money invested as above prior to 2nd September, 1939, will *not* count as War Savings for the purpose of determining resources in applying for a supplementary pension.) With regard to capital other than War Savings, an amount of less than £50 is disregarded; on £50 or more, 1s. a week will be taken into account for the first £50, and for each complete £25 thereafter up to £300. If the capital exceeds £300 in value, no supplementary pension can usually be granted.

Earnings of the pensioner or his dependants will be taken into account, but some portion will be disregarded in order to meet the personal requirements of the earner. Where the pensioner (or the husband or wife of the pensioner) is the householder and has self-supporting members of his family residing with him, a contribution of not more than 7s. a week from each may also be taken into account as part of his resources. Thus it will be noted that the Means Test, although not entirely abolished, has been modified in such a way as to remove at least some of the hardships to which recipients of this form of assistance were previously subjected.

THE BLIND COMMUNITY

THE letters from readers which followed our remarks on the significance of the term "Blind World," in the January issue, were full of interesting matter calling for further discussion. The propriety of the term itself was ably challenged by Miss Whitehead, and we ourselves have no hesitation in accepting her view that "Blind Community" is the more accurate term. A "world" suggests an entity apart from other worlds, whereas a community is within a world and shares with other communities all mundane vicissitudes. As Miss Whitehead points out, a community can only prosper through its relations with other communities, and any term which carries the faintest suggestion that the blind are a people apart, a peculiar people, is not only incorrect but harmful in its implications. The word "community" has the rightful implication of common interests but it is quite free from any taint of separateness or segregation.

Our reference to the fact that many blind people who have achieved personal distinction in various walks of life have abstained from blind welfare work was obviously not quite clear to several correspondents. We were referring to blind people who are in a position to devote some of their time, influence and experience to helping their blind fellows but who, for some reason, do not do so, and we did not intend to suggest that blind welfare offered employment and occupation to blind intellectuals who wilfully turned their backs on it. This we know is far from being the case, and we are unfortunately aware that many blind men and women of first-class intellectual attainment have frequently sought without success to obtain employment in blind welfare activities. To refer to such people, vainly endeavouring to utilise their talents for the benefit of the blind, as egotists would indeed, as Mr. Martin says, be an affront that should be rejected by every thinking blind person. But we consider that blind people who have been born into or have reached, by their own efforts, a social status which frees them from financial worry are, to some extent, egotistic if they either refrain or cut themselves away from blind welfare work. There may not be many blind people who enjoy economic independence but there have been several distinguished blind people in the past whose names have never been connected with blind welfare, and it is that type of man or woman whom we had in mind. It is possible that the aloofness of successful blind people from their unsuccessful blind brethren may have originally been caused by unsuccessful applications during the struggling days at the doors of institutions blind in more senses than one and deaf into the bargain; but we think that more often it has been caused by natural absorption in a successful career. There is a kind of splendid excuse for such absorption when we consider the handicap that has been overcome, but we firmly believe that if more successful blind people could feel the call to what Miss Whitehead rightly describes as a vocation and could constitute a majority on the governing and executive bodies of Institutions for the Blind, then there would be more openings in the Institutions for the younger men and women who, having equipped themselves for a career by their own talents and industry, await opportunity.

In another direction our contributor, Mr. Laurance R. Watson, has, we think rightly, pointed out the sentimentality, if not actual silliness, of denying the fact that lack of sight creates a vital dissimilarity to what is ordinarily accepted as "normal." It is, we believe, an unconscious denial of this fact that keeps away many a brilliant blind person from open recognition of it by devotion to work whose main object is to create a harmony between the dissimilarities of blind and sighted communities. The terms "normal" and "abnormal," and the trains of thought arising from their employment, are largely to blame. In Wells's "Country of the Blind" it was not blindness but sight that was abnormal. Similarly, in the "Community of the Blind" it is not sight but blindness that is normal. This is a point of view still insufficiently understood by many sighted workers for the blind. In trying to harmonise the work of the blind with the work of the sighted they tend towards a violent rejection of the idea of a blind community, forgetting that, in a sense, it is they who are the intruders. Their efforts are encumbered in dexterity and delicacy of touch by the magnitude of their majority. The blind have much to learn to tread a sure way in a world of endeavour dominated by sight impressions, but those who seek to guide them have perhaps even more to learn of the community in which they are aliens, the community, as Mr. Watson aptly describes it, of normal blind people.

THE EDITOR.

MEETING AND MIXING

By BARBARA ROSS MCINTOSH.

NOW that blind people are winning so many fresh laurels in varied fields of achievement, it may not be out of place to emphasise one of the homely, hearthside virtues, which though simple and unambitious, yet counts for much that is attractive and agreeable in life. To get close to the warm, pulsing heart of humanity, to win its confidence and discover its best—this is surely worthy of accomplishment and well deserving of practice.

As for the blind, it is of additional importance that no barrier should shut them off from the highways and byways of converse. Immediately a sighted person is introduced to one who is blind, there is a tightening up of faculties and a quickening of observation. Should the blind person be shy, hesitant, aggressive or aloof—such characteristics are swiftly registered on the debit side of his or her physical handicap. If on the other hand, the blind person is easy in manner, serene in outlook and courteous in bearing, the chances are that the sighted observer will forget all about the physical lack, and bestow on the friend an unconditional passport into the republic of intercourse.

My father, who had to do a big amount of meeting and mixing on Sundays and weekdays, always made it his custom to keep blindness in the background. He used an ordinary watch which had belonged to his father, and told the time on it, with scrupulous accuracy. When he came into a room, it was always with a buoyant step, while he greeted friend or stranger with a cheerful confidence which swept them along, and made them feel that his attention and understanding sympathy were exclusively theirs.

I remember a joiner in the north, who came into our house to do some repairs, and how he expanded when my father talked to him. They knew people and places in common, and later, the man remarked:—

"He's a fine, newsie man, the minister," and although this description evoked a smile, it was also a tribute to my father's approachableness.

Find a kindred interest and a common ground of contact, and all will be well, was one of my father's favourite theories, and I have witnessed convincing proof of it, again and again.

Three Welsh miners came to our district for a time, and they indentified themselves closely with our church life. Hoping that they might give them a touch of home in a strange land, my parents asked them to the manse to spend an evening. When they came, they were serious,

reticent and reluctant to commit themselves, or join in general conversation. Time dragged heavily, and my mother began to fear that the evening was not going to be a success; then my father suggested that they should inspect his new typewriter, and tap out messages to friends. The effect was magical: jokes flew thick and fast, and chill reserve fled away, never to return.

Meeting and mixing has always been one of my greatest delights, and I trust that it will long remain so. In my early days, I enjoyed a wide variety of friends. There was the genial old postman who liked to put anything addressed to me into my own hands, and beamed paternally on me, when I thanked him. There was the Highland shepherd, with whom I fraternised cordially, and whose promise of a lamb to be brought to the manse filled my mother with apprehension for some time to come. A railway carriage was my happy hunting ground for friends, and I once startled my mother by taking a prolonged farewell of an elderly lady and calling her by her Christian name. The lady upheld me, and said that she herself had told me to call her "Janet." Afterwards, we parted with mutual regrets and hopes of a future meeting, which were never realised.

When I was four, I was taken by some friends to a winter garden, where much to their surprise, the austere keeper spoke to me. I prattled happily in reply, and made random guesses at some of his questions. Presently, he held a leaf from a eucalyptus tree close to me.

"That's mental," I exclaimed; but the poor man was puzzled by my designation. Undaunted by his dissent, I went on:

"Mental that people use for colds."

"She has confused menthol with eucalyptus," he told my friends, "but if you bring her again, she will learn some of the correct names of our plants here."

Before we left, he made me a present of the leaf in question, which I kept for some time, in memory of my first peep into the enchanted land of nature knowledge.

During my father's later pastorates, I was much indoors by reason of my spinal trouble, and it was my duty to interview callers and receive messages for him in his absence. Some of them were at first doubtful to entrust an invalid with dates and details of arrangements, but my practical air won the day and gained the confidence of anxious bridegrooms and important fathers. Once I had to call diplomacy to

my aid in the handling of a difficult situation. A woman was shown in on me unannounced, and she greeted me as though she was sure that I would recognise her. I did not want to damp down her enthusiasm by allowing her to think that the representative of the manse did not know who she was. Very carefully I got her to tell me about the members of her family and their various characteristics, then I approached the question of the locality where she resided. I could have whooped with pleasure when she quite casually mentioned the name of her street, for by that simple act her identity was established in my mind without a doubt.

Some would think that my pre-war railway journeys made in my chair in the guard's van would be lacking in variety or human contact, but this is far from being the case. I have only to go back to my last summer holiday of 1939 to recall a journey to the Border which was rich in interest and experience. Some of my travel-

ling companions were carrier pigeons in a basket, and they kept up a continuous cooing, much to the disgust of a nervous collie. On returning home, an elderly porter came to help the guard to lift me, plus my chair, from the van. Fearing that the task might be too much for him, I inquired if he were sure about his strength, whereupon he answered,

"My wife aye tells me that I'm the healthiest man she ever had," and the response was a fitting epilogue to a holiday rich in the treasures of comradeship and contact.

To all blind friends I should like to pass on this scrap of rhyme and to wish them more joy on the journey and in mixing and meeting.

*The longer I live, the more let me give
Of courage and faith that shine :
Each mile of the road, may I ease some load,
And make some one's gladness mine :
And may it be said o'er my low-laid head—
"She shared with the other nine."*

CORRESPONDENCE

"Salute to Home Teachers."

To the Editor.

SIR,—Referring to your June Editorial, many Home Visitors who attended the rare Conferences held were glad to meet their colleagues in other counties, and probably wished for more opportunities of fraternising. It is obviously impracticable to suggest bringing our scattered fellow-workers together more frequently, but there is a definite lack of co-operation which could be met by a monthly paper conference in the form of a supplement in THE NEW BEACON. Here every problem besetting the Home Visitor could be discussed under the friendly guidance of an organisation with a postal committee of elected representatives from all the counties.

We need encouragement to link up, and if correspondence on the subject is slow at first, it is because our daily programme is physically and mentally tiring, leaving little energy in the evenings to write coherently on any subject. We are provided with a variety of emotions in dealing with all ages and types, filling in forms, soothing irritable landladies, and witnessing the troubles and illnesses of mankind ; but there is no opportunity of sharing opinions on cases as we return home to transcribe the day's experiences in official reports, unless one is fortunate enough to possess a sympathetic family listener.

So we tend to become introspective and discouraged by opposing influences. We worry over individual cases while realising that "Authority" is mainly concerned with the blind

in the mass. Bulky registers make it essential for our superior officers to have administrative and secretarial ability rather than visiting experience, hence so few promotions from the ranks of Home Visitors. But their main effort of fitting cases into neat pigeon holes of scales of assistance does not improve their tolerant understanding of individual problems in the homes. The Home Visitor alone knows just how difficult it is to fit her cases into watertight compartments and ignore the widely varying standards of life and reactions to blindness.

But, in the absence of stimulating discussions between fellow-workers, we become stultified and finally descend to the pigeon hole method, count our registers and value the day according to the numbers visited. We revolve around our own tiny world and learn nothing of other aspects of blind welfare beyond gleanings from THE NEW BEACON.

We need an energetic organiser, keen enough to push us out of these ruts. We need more information about other counties. The town visitor would like to hear about work in the rural area. It would be of educative benefit to visit training schools, workshops, and other institutions for the blind, and to meet men and women who have made their mark in blind welfare. But our "Authorities" should offer such facilities to improve our efficiency, not leave it to individual enthusiasts who are willing to spend their precious week-ends on such unofficial jaunts.

So please, Mr. Editor, why not a supplement written for Home Visitors by themselves? An article, a correspondence column, advisory service, exchange of experiences in case work, and teaching notes. There is a definite stimulus in getting into print which might well overcome the present tendency of the individual writer to blush at his or her temerity in daring to introduce opinions to others! Competitions might be arranged, with small awards for new ideas, handicraft novelties, etc. The cost could be met by an annual subscription by members who, if their salary is sufficiently generous, could find ways of spending prize money on the people who inspire their articles. So could we build up our efficiency by a friendly co-operation which is non-existent to-day.

I still remember my first days of home visiting, let loose in a congested slum area with no knowledge of blind welfare beyond that contained in a text book six years old which I studied for the College of Teachers Examination, but which proved to be totally inadequate for the experiences immediately at hand. Many embarrassing moments of early days could be avoided by the formation of a live organisation in which we felt sympathetic personal contact with a fellow-worker who knew the snags of inexperience, and also the dangerous ruts of years of isolated experience.

Yours, etc.,

A. K.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Thank you very much indeed for your "Salute to Home Teachers" in celebration of the coming of age of the Blind Persons Act, 1920.

It came as a tonic; and I am sure it will have had this effect on every Home Teacher reading it.

Your first paragraph relative to regarding the work as a vocation, and the conditions you advocate—such as a good holiday, opportunities to meet fellow-workers in the field for experience and exchange of ideas over the problems which crop up—should in my opinion be widely broadcast among employing authorities.

The Institute I serve fails sadly on this point; some of my colleagues have not been off the premises since 1936.

The holiday question is a disgrace; to date we have no idea as to whether we are to have a holiday, nor what the duration of the break will be.

Formerly we could choose our own time, and according to the terms of our agreement got the full fourteen days; now (and not because of the War) we are compelled to take our holiday in August, when accommodation is difficult to get at short notice, and expensive into the bargain.

So far as superannuation is concerned, we have almost given up hope, but trust that a joint application we have made *via* the College of Teachers and a private body may have some effect.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to state these facts.

Yours, etc.

"HOME TEACHER."

To the Editor.

SIR,—I am not sure that the suggestion mentioned herein is quite what you intended in your article on Home Teachers in the June NEW BEACON, but perhaps you will consider it a point worth raising.

To me one of the biggest needs of reform is that the Home Teacher should be free on Saturdays so that she may have a longer rest from the tremendous amount of travelling which her work involves; this would benefit Councils also, as it would save travelling expenses for that day.

As is readily recognised, no Home Teacher grudges extra time during the week if it is required, and it may be safely assumed that the present average of visits would show little difference in the year if this point is conceded.

It is understood that some counties have already recognised this, but I venture to plead for those who still have to visit on Saturdays. Moreover, it is not appreciated by those who are visited; in many cases people are out shopping; others are busy trying to clear up for the week-end; and though, where people are in, visitors are admitted, the people are much more pleased when they receive visits on another day.

With the possibility of raids at any time (even though we have had a few peaceful weeks), the strain on the Home Teacher has been much greater: the visits to bombed areas; the tracing of people who appear to be missing, then helping them to get in touch with friends who have been bombed out; helping evacuees from other counties to settle down in a new area among strangers after (as in one case) fifty years in one house; these are conditions which make a still greater demand on the Home Teacher's nervous system which the longer week-end rest would do much to rectify.

Yours, etc.,

H. T.

Teaching of Braille to Adults.

To the Editor.

SIR,—In your March Editorial you referred to a teacher who from the outset taught her pupils to read contracted Braille. It certainly sounds logical, as to learn a system that has later to be largely unlearned seems educationally unsound.

There is, however, a practical difficulty, and I should be glad to know if it has been overcome by those who follow this method of teaching. While it is simple enough to make up single sentences using the letters A to J (and even to make such sentences mouth-wateringly topical, like "A babe can have a fig, but dad can have a big egg"), as the learner progresses he must want something more stimulating than sentences. Must he learn all the signs before beginning to read consecutive narrative, which seems impossible to write without the useful terminations like -ed, -er, -tion? Or does the teacher of contracted Braille from the beginning allow a few words spelt out letter by letter, to be unlearned later on when the mysteries of ch, ed, ar—and the rest, are laid bare?

Yours etc.,

A BAD EGG.

Talking Machine Elocution.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Suggestions have been made in your columns that Talking Machines might be used for educational purposes in schools. I have difficulty in thinking that the dead voice of the machine could ever equal the live voice of a teacher, especially with the records of their present quality. One of your correspondents draws attention to the introduction of dialect, and I agree that this completely ruins many of the books issued for the Talking Machine. I have just read a novel by a living writer of which the English is much above the average and is a treat to listen to. But about 20 per cent. of the story is in dialect and the reader laid it off with so much exaggeration that practically one disc in five was incomprehensible. What would be thought if the publisher of a printed book issued a work so badly smudged in the printing that one page in every five was illegible? I find that the books recorded in America are far better than those produced in England as, after one is accustomed to the American intonation, no effort is required on the part of the listener. The Committee in charge of the Talking Books Library surely knows by this time what blind listeners—most of whom are elderly—require, viz., absolute clarity of speech and no elocutionary frills. No reader ought to be employed who has not had experience of reading to the blind. With such experience much of the present-day mistakes would disappear. Some rules might be laid down for their guidance, such as: (1) Remember that you are reading to a single blind listener and not to a large audience; (2) read evenly and steadily and don't put your own reactions into your voice, but allow the listener to have his, and therefore (3) don't gallop when you think the narrative is uninteresting or the

dialogue exciting; (4) don't—for the same reason—lower your voice to a whisper at one passage and raise it needlessly at another.

We blind people are for the most part fairly intelligent and can understand any book within our comprehension without the reader trying to air his elocution when he comes to the high lights of the story. When he flatters himself that he is a Yorkshireman or a Scotsman he makes himself ridiculous and, what is worse from the listener's point of view, next door to unintelligible. Reading for the blind listener ought to be the same as printing for the sighted reader—absolutely clear, simple and unadorned. Perhaps readers of THE NEW BEACON may be able to suggest other hints of use in improving the quality of the records issued in the Talking Books Library.

Yours, etc.,

W. C. LENG.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Gordon H. Laxton, of 8, Boscombe Avenue, Leyton, aged 39. He was a well-known figure as he toured the borough, carrying out his work as a piano-tuner. He lost his sight shortly after birth, but thanks to the devotion of his mother he became thoroughly well acquainted with everyday affairs and was in every way a delightful personality. He received his musical training at the Royal Normal College, and was a brilliant musician. For many years he had been the organist at the Leyton Methodist Church and he gave organ recitals in many parts. He was a nephew of the late Alderman Hayward, a former Mayor of the borough, and last year married Miss Bruhlman, Secretary of Leyton County High School for Girls.

The Rev. T. W. T. Miller, of Canterbury. He had been blind for a long time and his kindly and patient character had won him many friends. He busied himself in visiting other blind people in Canterbury and had ministered to them from time to time at St. Margaret's Church.

Leonard Taylor Birkby, of Armley, one of the pioneer blind masseurs in the county. He became blind by accident when he was twelve, and started training as a masseur in London in 1906. During the last war he was a member of the staff of Beckett's Park Hospital and did much good amongst the soldiers there. He also did massage work at Leeds Infirmary and had an appointment at St. James's Hospital, Leeds, up to the time of his death.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Royal Normal College Successes.—The following pupils of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Rowton Castle, nr. Shrewsbury, were successful candidates in the Elementary Typewriting Examination of the Royal Society of Arts held on 9th April, 1941:—

Axford, Gertrude
Bell, James
Bright, Georgina
Chandler, Ivy
Chew, Gordon
Ferrando, Olga

Fielding, Ronald
Lloyd, Vera
Powell, Mabel
Tait, Harold
Turley, Elizabeth
Watson, Hazel

All passed with credit.

U.S.A. Blind Workers Ahead on Defence Contract.—Working at the rate of 75 dozen mops a day, seven blind men of New Orleans, U.S.A., shipped the final 7,500 of 22,500 mops for the Army to the Quartermaster Depot at Atlanta eleven days ahead of schedule.

Two Successful Montreal Blind Students.—At McGill University Convocation on May 29th, two blind students received the B.A. degree.

Beryl Musgrove graduated with First-Class Honours in German and Latin, and Lloyd McClintock obtained distinction in the General Course. Besides pursuing her studies Miss Musgrove found time for many social activities at the University. She places a vast deal of importance on the friendships she has formed. She was a member of the Royal Victoria Glee Club. In order to have the opportunity of French conversation she attended meetings of the La Société Française. She was a member of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. During the past year she joined in War Service activities with the other students, taking a course in First Aid work. Miss Musgrove hopes to continue her studies at McGill with a view to having herself well equipped as a teacher.

When Lloyd McClintock met with the accident that deprived him of sight, he also lost his right hand. With amazing courage and unswerving determination he is overcoming a double handicap. Mr. McClintock has been staying at Douglas Hall, the McGill residence for male students, where he has played an active part as a member of the House Committee. Among the subjects he has taken at the University he has included a number of Courses in Economics, which he hopes to put to some practical use by securing a position in the business world.

Both these students received their early education at the School of the Montreal Association for the Blind, where, in addition to the

regular subjects, they mastered Braille and learned how to use a typewriter.

Blind—but a Shining Example.—A blind widow, Mrs. Richard Franks, of Cheslyn Hay, nr. Cannock, Staffs, has made since the start of the war, for the Red Cross and Comforts Fund, 127 pairs of socks, 10 pairs of cuffs, and two pairs of seaboot stockings.

She was described by the Chairman of the local Parish Council as “a shining example to voluntary war workers.”

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

National Association of Workshops.—The war has brought the Association important new responsibilities and many Government contracts, amounting by March, 1941, to nearly £17,000, and allocated among 38 institutions.

The Joint Rationing Committee has, in view of representations made by the Association, allocated to each institution for the blind 100 per cent. of its pre-war consumption of wool, and concessions have also been made under the Limitation of Supplies (Woven Textiles) Order, 1940, again as a result of the Association's representations. Workshops for the Blind throughout the country owe a debt of special gratitude to the Association and its officers and Committee for their furtherance of the interests of the blind, and their part in enabling the blind citizen to take his share in the national effort.

Empire.

Association for the Prevention of Blindness, Bengal.—The Annual Report for 1939-40 is a record of much valuable activity, and it is satisfactory to learn that at the time of writing the Association had four travelling dispensaries at work in the province, and hoped shortly to start a fifth. Each of these is under the direction of an Indian medical man, with experience in ophthalmology, and the work undertaken comprises eye examinations in schools and mills, the treatment of cases of eye injury (one dispensary alone treated 24,139 cases in the year and performed 587 operations), distribution of free leaflets on prevention of blindness, the giving of magic lantern and cinema talks in the villages on the care of the eyes, and the carrying out of a census of blindness in the areas covered.

Natal Bantu Blind Society.—This Society, affiliated to the South African National Council for the Blind, concerns itself with the general

welfare of over 2,000 native men and women suffering from blindness and is also alive to the importance of blindness-prevention, arranging for hospital treatment when this is required.

The Report wisely gives details of help afforded to individual cases, which are always so much more interesting than impersonal statistics. Of the five children in the care of the Society who are at the Athlone School for the Blind, "Samson is a most endearing little fellow"—and of those who received hospital treatment, a chief recovered the sight of one eye and returned to his kraal, "to see his twenty-two wives, his thirty-four children, his friends and his cattle."

The Society has only been in existence for a short time, but already it is planning an ambitious programme for the future, including a training centre, for which an "ideal site" has already been found, only eight miles from Durban.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices given are net prices and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production. They are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dances :		s.	d.
18363	Bennie, S. For all that I care, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18257	Mason, G. Over the hill, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18362	Nolan, B. Tumbling Tumbleweeds, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18364	Posford, G. The London I love, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6

Church :		s.	d.
18169	Attwood, T. Come, Holy Ghost (Anthem), V.S.	0	6
18256	Cathedral Psalter. Chants, V.S.	3	0

MOON BOOKS.

4439-44.	The Case of the Michaelmas Goose, by Witting. 6 vols. (Limited Edition.)		
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ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Biography :		Vols
Symons, A. J. A. Quest for Corvo	4	
Elton, Lord. Among Others	4	
Classics :		
Virgil. Aeneid, Books I-III, ed. by Freeman	3	
History :		
Hall, J. R. The Bourbon Restoration	9	
Law :		
Local Government Act, 1929. (19 Geo. 5. Ch. 17)	2	
Literature :		
Brownings, Selections from the	3	
Dowden, Edward. New Studies in Literature	5	
Heine, Poems from. Trans. P. G. L. Webb ..	2	
Jaggar, J. H. English in the Future	2	

Miscellaneous :		Vols.
Elgood, P. G. Transit of Egypt	6	
Morton, H. V. Women of the Bible	2	
Philosophy :		
Ross, W. David. Foundations of Ethics	5	
Political and Social Science :		
Price, John. Organised Labour and the War	3	
Simon, Ernest, and Others. Constructive Democracy	3	
Wintringham, Tom. New Ways of War	2	

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

30th June, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	7
<i>(Seven applications under consideration)</i>	
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	—
Wavertree House, Hove	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea ..	—
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring	—
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay ..	—
<i>(Applications for admission can now be received).</i>	

HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield..	3
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ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

TO BRAILLE ENTHUSIASTS.

Become word perfect. Equip yourself with notes clarifying the rules relating to lower sign contractions (Grade II). Apply for particulars to H. N. Vickerstaff (address as above). enclosing stamp.

WANTED: COPIES OF LETTERPRESS BOOKS ON BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, offers the original price of 2s. 6d. each for clean copies of the letterpress editions of *Key to the Braille Music Notation*, 1922 (Catalogue No. 6673), and *Elementary Lessons and Exercises in the Revised (1922) Braille Music Notation*, by Watson (Catalogue No. 7351).

A Budget of Good Holiday Reading for 3d. Copies of the N.I.B. Summer Annual (stories, light articles, jokes, etc.) for 1940 can now be obtained at half-price, 3d. net. Order now before stock is exhausted, quoting catalogue No. 18192, from National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland St., W.1.

WANTED—Post as Home Teacher (or as Temporary Assistant at a low salary), North of England, County area. Can bring own car. Apply: Miss Monroe, Ivy Garth, Kendal, Westmorland.

Home Teacher required with clerical qualifications. Salary, if certificated, £156 per annum, plus War Bonus. Apply by letter, not later than the 31st July, to the Secretary, Chester and District Blind Welfare Society, 13a, Lower Bridge Street, Chester.

HOMES FOR THE BLIND, FULWOOD, PRESTON.

Wanted, Resident Head Master with necessary qualifications required by the Board of Education as Head Teacher of a School for the Blind. Salary in accordance with Burnham Scale Grade II, Scale III. Applications, stating age, experience, qualifications, accompanied by testimonials, to be sent before 25th July to the Superintendent.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind: Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

ROYAL MIDLAND INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the appointment of Organiser of Voluntary Collections. Experience in similar capacity an advantage. Car provided.

Salary according to qualifications. Applications, giving full particulars, should reach the undersigned not later than July 26th, 1941.

A. C. V. THOMAS,
Superintendent and Secretary.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING.

Blind Persons Act, 1920.

APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER AND VISITOR.

Applications are invited for the post of female (sighted) Home Teacher and Visitor of blind persons in Reading, at a salary at the rate of £183 per annum, rising, subject to satisfactory service, by annual increments of £13 to £209 per annum (the maximum salary of the post), together with a cost of living bonus awarded by the Council amounting to 7s. per week.

Applicants must have some knowledge of handicrafts suitable for blind persons, of Braille, as well as an ability to teach.

The person selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to her inclusion in the superannuation scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, experience, qualifications, and date when services would be available, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, must be delivered to me endorsed "Home Teacher and Visitor," not later than Thursday, 24th instant.

C. S. JOHNSON, Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Reading.
11th July, 1941.

TYPEWRITERS WANTED: The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland St., London, W.1, requires typewriters, particularly for the instruction and use of newly blinded people, and will offer reasonable prices for up-to-date second-hand machines in good working order. Please send full particulars.



*By kind permission of the Evening Standard Co., Ltd.,
and Mr. David Low.*

BRaille PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 44.—**The Secret Vanguard**, by Michael Innes. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

A story of spying and counter-spying in England and Scotland, beginning with the murder of an inoffensive dilettante and following the hairbreadth escapes of a charming heroine to a dramatic climax in the wilds of Scotland. Written with much literary distinction.

No. 45.—**If Hitler Comes, A Cautionary Tale**, by Douglas Brown and Christopher Serpell. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

This remarkable book is a picture, painted from life, of what would happen to us if the Germans won. It reads like a true historical picture of England with Hitler and the Nazis in control. It is movingly and skilfully written; it is appallingly life-like and uncannily vivid.

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XXV. No. 296.

AUGUST 15TH, 1941.

PRICE 3D.

3s. PER ANNUM. POST FREE.

Entered as Second Class Matter, March 15, 1929, at the Post Office at Boston, Mass., under the Act of March 3, 1879 (Sec. 397, P.L. and R.)

THE BLIND MAN'S RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

By H. BOOTH

DURING the past three years, I have, as a matter of routine, been obliged to read extracts from hundreds of books, most of them novels recently published. Some of them represent the genuinely creative work of uncompromising artists, while a much larger proportion are the product of more or less competent literary craftsmen whose business it is to see that the capricious demands of the reading public are met or even anticipated. Amid this spate of writings it was easy enough to observe all the manifold degrees of intrinsic merit or downright worthlessness. But my present concern is not with literary criticism. There is one feature common to all these books, good and bad alike, and it is that which has led me to write this article.

On almost every page of the average novel, something is quite simply and unconsciously taken for granted which, when the book comes within the range of a blind reader, loses at any rate some of its validity. There is, in fact, a complex appeal to the memory of visual experience which assumes an infinite variety of forms. Now there are still plenty of blind readers who, for obvious physiological reasons, have never had any direct, sensory experience of light, and for whom light exists largely as an intellectual concept based solely on such information as can reach them from a world beyond their physical consciousness. Many more blind and partially blind readers retain faded and uncertain visual impressions and can hardly be expected to respond fully and instantaneously to the pictorial element in literature. Nevertheless, the books which started my present train of thought, and thousands like them, have appeared in Braille, and there is unquestionably a very brisk demand for them.

It is not difficult to see why this should be so, but I wish rather to discuss what elements in their response to literature are common to both blind and sighted, and what important

divergences there may be. And first it should be remembered that the differences between blind and sighted are not fundamental. They impose limitations to mutual understanding, but these do not amount to nearly so much as a great many people appear to imagine. The presumption displayed by those who regard us, at least by implication, as either sub-human or non-human is as amusing as it is ill-informed. There are differences of mechanism, affecting chiefly our respective methods of perceiving and coping with the phenomena about us, but the basic similarities in our mental and particularly our emotional make-up cannot be too often stressed. Now literature, in order to succeed, must powerfully stimulate the emotions and the imagination, and the fillip given to this stimulus by the use of visual imagery is the only clear advantage enjoyed by the sighted reader over his blind fellow-reader, and even this advantage is usually minimised in various ways. For instance, the blind reader with a strong taste for romance will not easily be discouraged by the lengthy, lusciously descriptive flights of romantic fiction. Desert sunsets, moonlight on the water, the exuberant splendour of jungle or forest, the complex details of figure, dress and physiognomy—which are often too much even for the sighted—none of these things will deter him despite their apparent irrelevance to one who has perhaps never seen. Setting and background are, after all, relatively unimportant so long as the human personalities of the story are made to live convincingly; and, for the purposes of fiction, it matters little whether they evoke in us a profounder awareness of reality, or whether they feed our love of fantasy when, tired of coping with the problems of everyday living, we dream of life as we should like it to be. The externals of a story occupy so subordinate a place that what is not immediately and without conscious effort understood can readily be supplied by the imagination. Much of the descriptive matter of fiction has very little meaning even for the sighted. A series of suggestive words and phrases, charged with emotional significance, catches up the imagination, and the barren *clichés* are simply ignored. These remarks have, of course, to be modified where the work of the really great novelists is in question. There is an obvious kinship between the novel and the drama, and those who enjoy radio plays and take delight in the more austere Shakespeare productions will readily agree that the blind reader of fiction is at no great disadvantage.

Evocative language, whether in great poetry or in "Peg's Paper," serves two main purposes.

It helps to cut us off from the intrusions of the hundred and one details of our environment which are forever clamouring to be recorded by the senses; we become more suggestible, as the psychologist would put it, and the skilled writer can then exercise a sort of enchantment upon us, lulling our critical faculty and making us feel for the moment a close kinship with his creations. Precision and accuracy are essential to the scientist but more or less irrelevant to the writer of fiction.

"The sun, enormous and unwieldy, began to wobble over the horizon. The sea swelled up to meet it, it dipped, raised itself, then, turning over and over, sank unsteadily, leaving a last great gleaming rim that lasted obstinately for nearly half a minute before it disappeared."

This is evocative language par excellence in that it suggests a picture which can be drawn in almost any way that takes the individual fancy. Though light means nothing to me, this passage does convey something of the strangeness of the coming on of night over the sea in the height of summer.

In a sense, almost the whole of language is descriptive and pictorial. We may use scores of metaphors without knowing what a metaphor is, and in fact they have become so much a part of our everyday speech that they no longer appeal directly to the imagination. Thus a blind person can say "I see what you mean," or "I saw so-and-so yesterday," without embarrassing his sighted friends. Looking down the first page of this article I can, in as many seconds, find half a dozen words which were once metaphors intended to suggest a picture to the mind but which are now well-worn coins of the language: — obliged, routine, extracts, capricious, writings, obvious. This process by which the metaphorical element in words becomes hidden from us affects the written as well as the spoken language. Vivid words and phrases at last become common property and are overworked until much of their meaning is lost. The poetry of to-day furnishes the *clichés* and commonplaces of to-morrow. This is a great help to the blind reader, for he can learn quickly and almost unconsciously to interpret such words and phrases correctly. The conventional links between certain colours and emotions, to take but a single instance, will help him over many a rough place. Where description is of a richer, more individual kind, the blind reader is at a disadvantage which varies with the amount of purely visual imagery. A lively imagination can minimise this disadvantage but it remains none the less something to be reckoned with.

Another point not easily realised is this: the sighted reader has brought the art of skimming to such a degree of perfection that he can often practise it without conscious effort. That is to say, he can get a general impression of the sense of a story by seizing upon key words and phrases and ignoring whatever he chooses to regard as padding. This may not be complimentary to the author, but it is a valuable asset which is denied to the blind reader. The eye, in a given time, must command more words than the fingers possibly can, and only those of us who learnt Braille in infancy can absorb it in phrases rather than in single words. This means that many blind readers are compelled to spend an undue amount of time on matter which is not wholly or immediately intelligible to them. These more or less tedious interludes must be borne for the sake of the story, and, as I have tried to show, they are not in practice so completely without meaning as some of our sighted friends appear to imagine. Philosophy has it that nothing is perceived except through the senses, and if this be true, the blind cannot fully appreciate the world in which they live. Nevertheless, their response to literature is not fundamentally different from that of the sighted and, where they are at a disadvantage, it can be very easily exaggerated.

On the receptive side, in fact, they are not often conscious of their handicap. But creative literary activity is quite another matter, and I shall conclude this article with a brief consideration of some of the problems which beset the blind writer. In the first place, if he is to gain any sort of reputation at all his work must be read by the sighted—it must therefore be intelligible to them. Now from what has been said above, it will be seen that the common currency of language can be handled easily and with little risk of misunderstandings even in those numerous cases where the blind writer is using words whose original descriptive content lies beyond his imagination. One needs to be knowledgeable about many things without having actually experienced them; otherwise deplorable howlers will be frequent and the effectiveness of one's work will be ruined. Extensive reading and a wide range of intimate contacts in the world at large form the best equipment for creating a sense of confidence, but there are major difficulties with which it cannot hope to deal adequately. What I have termed the common currency of language is not legal tender above a certain amount, and will be rejected by reader and publisher alike if coins of a greater value are not included from time to time. This suggests that when the blind writer has something to say that has

not been said a thousand times before, he must be very chary indeed of sticking to secondhand visual imagery—and, in fact, he will almost inevitably find it impossible to express himself unless he can discover the real key to the ideas he wishes to convey. The world in which touch and hearing, taste and smell, are not largely dominated by sight obviously cannot be expressed in terms of dimly apprehended visual imagery. This must, of course, be used in fairly large doses alongside imagery drawn from the other senses which has its source in real and vivid experience—otherwise the blind writer could not be understood by the general public.

This seems simple enough as a bald statement, but its implications are extremely important. It has been for some time the fashion to educate the blind into forgetting their handicap whenever this is practicable. Now in so far as this means enabling them to conquer the more obvious difficulties and to assume an easy, natural demeanour, it is clearly sound policy; but when it means ignoring certain factors altogether, encourages the blind to try to view everything from the sighted standpoint, and suggests no natural readjustment of aesthetic notions, it becomes a mixed blessing. For instance, as a child I had to produce the conventional "compositions" on the conventional subjects, and criticism of these was based on faults of grammar and style. The serious error of misusing descriptive words was not always checked, and I cannot remember ever being urged to use illustrations which really meant something to me. This was all very well up to a point. It taught me to write in ordered sentences and enabled me to put a letter together in the approved manner. But at sixteen or thereabouts, when the self-conscious adolescent stage was reached, I became increasingly aware that real self-expression through writing was a hopeless undertaking. This conviction affected me in a variety of ways, and I have not yet been able to shed it completely. Many of my friends have passed through similar experiences, and I was not in the least surprised that Mr. Gielgud should have found so little merit in a set of plays offered some time ago by blind competitors for his judgment.

My conclusion is that the teaching of English in schools for the blind is not altogether satisfactory and that this and other related matters should be given more serious thought. I shall not offer constructive suggestions here. Much ground has been covered all too briefly as it is. My aim is to provoke a fruitful discussion to which I should be glad to make a further contribution.

HOME NEWS

Middlesex Grants to be paid by Cheque.—The Middlesex Education Committee's Blind Persons Sub-Committee have had under consideration the method of paying domiciliary assistance grants. Hitherto these have usually been paid by postal orders remitted through the post, and in order to comply with the County Council's requirement that the Association shall obtain some form of receipt or witnessed statement for payments made under the Domiciliary Assistance Scheme, a form of receipt and a stamped addressed envelope have been enclosed with the remittance. In very many cases, as a result of the percentage increase, the amount of the grant now includes odd pence which are not conveniently payable by the postal order method.

Officers of the Association have put forward an alternative method of payment which will be simpler and less costly to the County Council. This is to pay the amounts by cheques which when cashed will be a form of receipt and will obviate the necessity for forwarding stamped addressed envelopes and forms of receipt to the recipients of grant. Arrangements are being made for the cheques to be cashable at branches of the Midland Bank or, in districts where there is no local branch, at local county and rates offices. If this method puts any individual blind person to serious inconvenience arrangements will be made to pay his grant by postal order as heretofore. The new method will secure an immediate saving on poundage, postage, etc., of more than £600 per annum, and the saving on poundage would be increased with any increase in the rates of domiciliary assistance. The Blind Persons Sub-Committee have authorised the Middlesex Association for the Blind to adopt this method of paying grants, and the Education Committee recommend that their action be confirmed.

Somerset Blind Dig for Victory.—A "Dig for Victory" Campaign in Somerset has been most successful, and blind folk who have never gardened before have raised fine crops. The Home Teacher, who is herself a keen gardener, was convinced that with a little encouragement useful vegetables could be grown. It was decided to have different classes, ranging from boxes of mustard-and-cress grown by invalids, to full vegetable gardens. The keenest enthusiasm was shown, and people who usually have to be coaxed to go out of doors took entire charge of plots of ground where their own lettuces thrived. Kind people took great trouble over the judging, and the highest marks were given to those who had worked unaided. The

judges were loud in their admiration, and expressed surprise at the high quality and quantity of the crops grown.

Northern Counties Association for the Blind.—The 25th Annual Meeting of the General Council met at Leeds on June 26th, when Councillor Clydesdale presided and over 80 representatives were present. A civic welcome was accorded the delegates by the Lord Mayor, and by kind invitation of the Corporation of the city the meeting was held in the Civic Hall. During the morning session reports were presented by Dr. Kay Sharp (Medical Sub-Committee) and Councillor Yorke (Employment Sub-Committee), and there was a discussion on the problems of evacuation. The afternoon session was devoted to the proposed revision of the constitution of the Executive, whereby election of the Executive by the General Council should supersede the principle of co-option. Three resolutions were put forward, but none were carried. At the close of the meeting the delegates were entertained to tea by kind invitation of the Lord Mayor.

Extra Flour for Guide Dogs.—The Food Controller has announced that trained guide and companion dogs for the blind are to have a special allocation of flour.

Control of Willow Rods.—The Minister of Supply has made an Order, which came into force on July 23rd, 1941, fixing maximum prices for home grown willow rods, suitable for use in the manufacture of basket ware.

Under the Order the maximum prices of prepared willows are £50 a ton for white or buff yearlings, willows not more than 6 feet long, £40 a ton for similar willows over 6 feet long; £28 for whites or buffs 2 or more yearling willow rods of any length; and £18 a ton for ground willow rods. Maximum prices are for delivery free on rail, or at buyers' option, free on transport at sellers' premises. No extra charges may be made for any grading, sorting or packing. The Order does not apply to willows known in the trade as "Dickey Meadows."

Copies of the Order may be obtained (price 1d.) from His Majesty's Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, W.C. 2.

Mr. J. H. Mines to Retire.—At the annual meeting of the Liverpool Workshops for the Blind, Mr. J. H. Mines, who has been Hon. Secretary of the Society for seventeen years, announced that he was retiring. Mr. Mines is, however, to continue as a member of the Society's Committee.

FOREIGN NEWS

News from Sweden and Finland.—The many English friends of Mr. Harald Thilander, Editor of the Braille Esperanto monthly *Esperanta Ligilo*, will be glad to know that Mr. W. P. Merrick has recently had from Sweden some news of him which has been circulated to English readers of Esperanto. One of Mr. Thilander's first thoughts was for our National Institute for the Blind. "Do they continue?" he writes. "Does the *World Digest* appear? How delighted we were to read it!" He gave some interesting items of news from countries now almost isolated from Great Britain. The seven-volume Swedish-French Dictionary in Braille, begun three years ago, in which Mr. Merrick's Braille Notation of the International Phonetic Alphabet has been used, is now finished, and other new Braille publications are a Grammar of the Finnish language in Swedish, a small Swedish-Finnish Vocabulary, and an Instruction Book for learning English, in Finnish, for the use of the many blind people in Finland who wish to learn our language. No English Braille magazines are received in Sweden and only a few American. With few exceptions Braille publications cannot now be sent from country to country in Europe. Mr. Thilander has even had to stop publication of the Scandinavian Braille Music Magazine which he has printed for twenty years. This magazine was edited in Denmark, administered in Norway and printed in Sweden. Mr. Thilander gives news of various Swedish blind men known to British

Esperantists. One is working in the Radio Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, his duty being to listen and report on English radio communications. Another continues as a Teacher of English and of Esperanto at the Institute for the Blind at Tomtebodå. He also gives news of the Finnish blind, several of whom are busy with the re-education of Finnish blinded soldiers. Not more than sixty men were blinded in the war against Russia, and some of them will become masseurs—a very popular profession amongst the Finnish blind.

American Convention Hears of the British Blind in War-time.—The American Association of Workers for the Blind held its Annual Convention at Indianapolis from the 7th to the 11th July. The Convention brought together practically all the workers for the blind in America and Canada. Papers on all aspects of blind welfare were read at the sittings, and amongst them was one on "The British Blind in War-time," contributed, at the request of the organisers of the Convention, by Mr. W. McG. Eagar, Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind. Mr. Eagar concluded his survey of the British system of blind welfare in war-time by saying that, with all certainty, the system had proved flexible and elastic in the immense strain thrown upon it. "We are proud," he said, "of the way in which the blind of Great Britain have behaved in the hour of freedom's greatest struggle and have found in the time of testing qualities of greatness."

A TRIP ON THE WAVENEY

This account of a novel "social" for the blind is contributed by Mrs. S. L. Barrett, Honorary Visitor for Beccles, East Suffolk County Association for the Blind.

EVERY month we meet and have a social afternoon consisting of talks on various subjects, games, songs, choruses, catches and other excitements.

This is all very well in winter when we have to sit and keep warm and cosy, but it did seem a pity on a fine day to waste the real summer weather out-of-doors.

Adjoining the garden is a long quay by the river-side. It only needed a boat to complete an outing on the water. But what boat? Luckily, a boat-builder lives next door. After an interview it appeared he had just one launch, a cruiser, fitted with an engine. Could we have it? The answer was doubtful.

"Yes, if possible, but I never know when refugees may suddenly come from the coast and want to live on it."

However, they did not turn up and we had our trip. The weather was perfect, there were no disturbing sirens, nothing went wrong, and we had a delightful afternoon. It was amusing, petrol being limited, to guess how far we could go without being stranded in the middle of the river.

When we got back it was tea-time. The social ended with games and a motor-drive home. And we intend, all being well, to repeat this outing another week.

[The cost of hiring the motor launch is met in a novel way which will interest readers. Mrs. Barrett lends her lawn once a week to the Local Adults' School (Women's Branch) for games of bowls. The members contribute 2d. each for the evening's enjoyment, and the proceeds are given towards the cost of the Socials for the Blind.—EDITOR.]

A BLIND GROCER IN WAR-TIME

By JAMES B. JONES.

A BLIND grocer in a village stores. It sounds a stiff job—when one remembers the hundred and one oddments, from hairpins and pots and pans to stockings and cigarettes, as well as the ordinary stocks of groceries and provisions to be found in a village stores. Nor is it any easier in war-time, with its rationing complications and the shortage of goods of every kind.

I am proving that it can be done. Of course I am not a real grocer, not the kind, I mean, who stands with a smiling face behind a counter and hands you the articles you require. I am the grocer behind the scenes. I have learned the requirements of my village neighbours, I order the goods, pay the bills, see that my shop is kept bright and spotlessly clean, and keep my customers in a good temper by giving them the best service possible.

They see little of me, but mine is the hand that sends off the orders to provide them with the goods they require. Often I surprise my customers by addressing them by their names before they even open their lips. Their step, some nervous little cough, or other peculiarity has betrayed them.

For sixteen years I have been blind and a grocer. Before that I was a successful London journalist for twenty-five years. Darkness came suddenly and I was compelled to begin life all over again.

Of course I can only accomplish my arduous task with the help of trustworthy, sympathetic and understanding friends. I had a manager and an assistant who carried out my wishes. In peace-time all works smoothly. In war-time it is a different matter. For instance, the Government has thought it necessary to take my two helpers away.

My van driver has been sent to forestry work and my manager is now a member of the R.A.F. The latter is my own son-in-law, and has been my right hand for six years. Though he was under thirty years of age, I thought the needs of our village and my own infirmity were sufficient to retain him in useful public service. "Not so," said the military tribunal. "You must close down if you can't sell your shop, or find another manager." One member of the tribunal even went further. "If you can't work any longer as a journalist, and you can't do much in your grocer's shop, why can't you find some other work to do." That was a nasty one for

a man who started to earn his living fifty years ago.

Rationing is a difficulty which all grocers have to face. A blind grocer can do little except to tell his customers what they have to do and what they can expect to receive.

When the scheme started two-thirds of our customers omitted to fill in their ration books. Country people seem to dislike writing of any kind. When you have a hundred customers, which means about five hundred names and addresses to fill, it takes up a good deal of a grocer's time.

Most people good temperedly submit when you explain that because of old Hitler it is impossible to supply them with the pineapple, tinned salmon, and bully beef, which have to come long journeys from overseas.

The grocer's shop is one of the few places in the village where women can meet to enjoy a good laugh together. I could tell of many amusing scenes.

Soon after the war started, when the shop was full of customers, a motorist pulled up outside, put his head through the doorway, and asked if anyone could tell him where to find the searchlight.

It was at the time when everyone was told to beware of spies. There was an ominous silence. Even a blind man could see the blank expressionless faces all round.

"Never heard tell of one, mister," said a voice at last.

Other customers gasped. Some shook their heads. The searchlight, whose long silvery fingers probing for the night raider was as well known as the square tower of the village church.

"To tell the truth," the stranger went on, "I wanted to find Mrs. Brown who lives nearby."

An instantaneous outburst of laughter was his reward. Everybody knew Mrs. Brown and realised the motorist was not a spy, and he was given the needed direction.

Have you ever heard of blind A.R.P. workers? In this respect I think my son and I are unique. My son is twenty-four and has been blind since his sight was destroyed by a fellow schoolboy. Before the war began he attended A.R.P. lectures and came out on top of the local examination. Since then he has put in a night's duty every week.

He cannot, of course, go out searching for

incendiary and other bombs, but he does answer and put through telephone calls, keeps the post in good order, and sees to the comfort of wardens.

He can only do this, of course, because the warden's post happens to be situated on my premises. My part is to act as day warden. I receive all warnings from headquarters and pass them on. More than once I have blown the whistle to warn the village school and people living in outlying roads. It is not much, but it shows that even the blind can do their bit for their country.

Still, things have not worked out so badly. I have obtained the help of a smart girl assistant,

who now drives my van and serves my customers; and an old friend, a retired grocer, has put on the white jacket once more in order to help me and see that our neighbours have their full share of the food that goes round.

As for raids, we have had our fair share. One of my shop windows is boarded up as a result of a nearby blast. Yet, although we live within two miles of a big aerodrome, it is all the damage we have received. We have had more than one dog fight overhead and once a flaming bomber seemed as if it was going to wipe out our village. As for my own reaction, when the night raiders come, it is to put my trust in the Lord, and go to bed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Talking Machine Elocution.

To the Editor.

Sir,—In spite of the wise reminder *de gustibus non est disputandum*, I feel compelled to protest against the sweeping and most unfair complaints from Mr. W. C. Leng in your current number. St. Paul remarked to the Corinthians "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification." Naturally different voices and styles of reading cannot be equally pleasing to every one. But, speaking for myself, I never cease to be amazed, first, at the care and perception with which the readers of our Talking Books are selected, secondly, at the splendid way in which the books are read and, thirdly, at the smooth and competent organisation of the distribution of the books. Are we to gather that Mr. Leng would like a Scott novel or an Irish story or, say, "Far from the Madding Crowd" to be recited in the same dull monotonous voice in which the B.B.C. announcers, poor fellows, are compelled to turn out the news? How they must welcome the chance of reading some of our books in their charming natural styles!

Both the British and American Committees, readers and organisers, are deserving of the very highest praise, not to forget Lord Nuffield and other kind people who have developed the finest boon to the blind since Louis Braille.

I disagree with every word in Mr. Leng's strange letter.

Yours, etc.

GERARD E. FOX.

To the Editor.

SIR,—I have had the pleasure of listening to 79 books recorded for the Talking Book Library

for the blind, and I raise my hat to the excellent team of readers employed by the Sound Recording Committee. I wish, through your columns, if I may, to reply to Mr. W. C. Leng's letter in the July issue of THE NEW BEACON. He appears to want all readers to drop dialect. One example of the futility of that policy will suffice; fancy listening to "A Damsel in Distress" in plain standard English. Why, 80 per cent. of its brilliant humour would be lost! I want dialect, particularly when it is read to me by someone that can speak it as it should be spoken. Has Mr. Leng ever been able to read print? If so, he must know that he will constantly come in contact with dialect in print. As a matter of fact, the books are read to us from the printed copies, so that it is quite wrong to think that one gets no dialect in print. Has Mr. Leng thought what would happen if his rules were adopted? All books would tend to become like radio news bulletins. I hope that readers will continue to put their own interpretations in the parts of the book which afford them opportunity to do so; then the listener forgets he is listening to a machine, and realises that he is listening to a human voice. Great musical conductors build their personality on their interpretation of the works of the great masters, and I like to think that the characters in the book are being made to live through the personality of the reader. The only rule I should stress would be that the reader is familiar with the book before he or she reads it to us.

So, I say to the readers, thank you ever so much, and carry on as you have done. And to Mr. Leng—well, it's the wear and tear of the record that you really are finding fault with.

We shall have to put up with that while this spot of bother continues with the nasty Nazis, so change that needle more frequently.

Yours, etc.

B. COOK.

A Shorthand for Sighted Braillists.

To the Editor.

SIR,—I wonder how many sighted Braillists have found the great advantage that Braille abbreviations and contractions can be when scribbling hurried pencil notes. Naturally, one can only make use of these if what one is writing is to be read by oneself alone or by another person who knows Braille. But one frequently has to write things down for one's own use, such as notes to aid one's memory or rough copies of important letters or articles.

I have used Braille abbreviations and some contractions for this purpose for many years, but recently I have had occasion to find them of greater service to me than ever before. For the last month or two I have been doing a part-time war job in an office where one of my duties is to take down and afterwards type out letters for the Honorary Secretary of a certain war-time organisation. Unfortunately I have never learnt shorthand. Knowing this, my employer usually dictates fairly slowly. But she sometimes forgets that I am taking down in long-hand, and my pencil has to go full speed ahead to keep up with her. I am sure I should often get hopelessly lost if I were using full longhand. The use of the (to the Braille writer) familiar shortenings, cd (could), rcv (receive), h (have), k (knowledge), etc., save me.

No doubt many people familiar with Braille make use of this assistance to speed in a hurried life. I met one lady who used all the Braille abbreviations when writing letters to a friend who was familiar with Braille. Apart from other advantages, it's not a bad way of saving a little space in these days when every centimetre of paper is so valuable!

Yours, etc.,

HELEN CHALMERS.

"The Children's Encyclopaedia."

To the Editor.

SIR,—I was much interested by Mr. Driver's contribution "Some Suggested Developments" to the April BEACON, and by your editorial comments on the possibilities of producing a Braille Encyclopaedia. I have awaited subsequent information but, in its absence, I venture to call your attention to the fact that the Northern Branch of the National Library for the

Blind has been steadily producing selections from the "Children's Encyclopaedia" since the middle of 1937.

Early in 1937, as a result of enquiries amongst blind children and their teachers, it was decided that an experiment should be made with this transcription. Mr. Arthur Mee and the publishers generously allowed the adaptation and omission of text where advisable, and the work of selection and transcription has been undertaken by an ex-secondary schoolmaster of wide experience. Six Braille volumes are produced from one inkprint volume and the work has now reached its twenty-fourth Braille volume. The book is being issued in groups of six volumes at varying intervals and the fourth group will shortly be available.

Your readers will doubtless be aware of the varied contents of this Encyclopaedia, and will be glad to hear that its Braille counterpart contains articles on a diversity of subjects—science, history, literature, biology, etc.

The first Braille volume, for instance, contains nine articles:—

Earth and its Neighbours: The Story of the Boundless Universe.

Animal Life: Nature's wonderful living family in earth, and air and sea.

History: The March of Man from the age of barbarism to the League of Nations.

Familiar Things: The story of the things we see about us every day.

Wonder: Plain answers to the questions of the Children of the World.

Ourselves: The wonderful house we live in, and our place in the World.

Plant Life: The story of the marvellous plants that cover the earth.

Power: The story of where power comes from, what it does and how it works.

Ideas: The great words that stir the hearts and minds of all mankind.

The fourth and latest group of volumes contains a series of particularly interesting articles on nineteenth century English literature.

Mr. Driver's plea is for a work of reference suited to the adolescent mind, and on this score the "Children's Encyclopaedia" would seem a happier beginning than the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." Finally, it would be a pity if a work which is so deservedly popular amongst sighted children were not equally well known to blind children and their teachers, and I should therefore be grateful if you would give this matter the publicity of your columns.

Yours, etc.,

A. M. HEWER,

Secretary, National Library for the Blind,
Northern Branch, Manchester.

TRAINING COURSES AND REFRESHER COURSES FOR HOME TEACHERS

IN the June editorial, *Salute to Home Teachers*, a reference was made to the training course recently inaugurated by the Southern Regional Association for the Blind, which, by giving prospective home teachers a four months' training in handicrafts, Braille and Moon, professional knowledge, and home-visiting under the supervision of an experienced worker, should enable them to take up paid posts under local authorities with far greater confidence. Of course, they will still have much to learn from first-hand experience, but at least such a course should save them from some of the worst pitfalls of the beginner, and—more important still—the blind in their care are less likely to be the victims of their inexperience. "I still remember my first days of home visiting," wrote a correspondent in a letter published in our last issue, "let loose in a congested slum area, with no knowledge of blind welfare beyond that contained in a text-book six years old, which I studied for the College of Teachers' examination, but which proved to be totally inadequate for the experiences immediately at hand." The course planned by the Southern Regional Association should save this correspondent and those like her from many anxious moments.

There may be some people who still imagine that home visitors need little more than a kind heart, but such people are few; now more than ever, since the war has brought its new worries of war-damage claims, ration-books, clothes coupons and the black-out (to mention only a few of the complications of living in a Hitler-ridden world) the elderly blind need a competent friend to steer them through, and although the Home Teachers' training course does not profess to solve such problems, it enables the would-be home teacher to visit in company with someone of experience, and to see what a home teacher's common sense and cool head can do to instil courage and to give confidence to blind men and women living in abnormal times.

The Southern Regional course has specially justified itself in the last few weeks, for three out of the four first candidates to take the training passed the Home Teachers' Examination of the College of Teachers at first entry, and managed between them to get honours in ten subjects; one of the three was *proxime accessit* for the Pearson Prize, with honours in four subjects. The course was held at the Royal Institution for the Blind, Birmingham, and some of those who took it did so in conditions which must have made concentrated study unusually difficult; for Birmingham was at the time undergoing a severe run of night-bombing.

Almost every home teacher, especially perhaps those who have to work in rural areas, is beset now and again with the feeling that her job is a very lonely one. She misses the pleasant exchange of experiences which is part of the life of the worker who returns daily to a central office to report, and is often unable to straighten out her human problems by discussion with a wise colleague. And she is apt to wonder—and not without cause—after a few years' work in comparative isolation whether she is not getting into a rut; whether she is really securing from State and local authority all the financial benefits for which the blind in her care are eligible; whether her plait borders are quite all they should be; whether there are not some new pastime occupations which might usefully be introduced into her area; and whether her teaching of Braille and Moon is on reasonably good and up-to-date lines. For this reason, refresher courses should play as important a part in the organisation of the home teaching service as training courses, and it is to be hoped that as the Southern Regional has started its training course, it will follow this up by regular refresher courses for those already engaged in home teaching. Conferences are valuable, and give home teachers an opportunity of meeting one another, but they are generally limited to one day, and train restrictions to-day shorten them still further. A fortnight's refresher course, with classes for handicrafts and lectures on present-day legislation and on the theoretical side of the work generally, should do much to give the home teacher freshness of outlook and send her back to her work invigorated. One realises the difficulties of local authorities asked to spare a hard-worked home teacher for such a course in times when office staffs are depleted, but it is to be hoped that they will take a long view. The home teacher who leaves her district unvisited for two weeks, while she gains new vitality and new ideas to carry her on for the rest of the year, is wasting neither her own time nor that of her employing agency.

THE EDITOR.

INDUSTRIAL NOTES

By BEN PURSE.

THOSE of us who are deeply interested in industrial problems as they concern workshops for the blind, are aware of the fact that the present unprecedented demand for labour must have an appreciable effect upon the special organisations to which reference is here made. Many of the reports of these industrial undertakings are not yet available, but it is clear that economic earnings have risen appreciably since 1939. Trade Union rates in the basket-making industry have increased by about 27 per cent., and although not every occupation practised by blind persons shows quite the same advance, it is certain, with perhaps one or two exceptions, the rise in wages is reflected in the lower subsidies that have to be provided by local authorities. If organisations for the blind, therefore, cannot reduce their trade losses substantially at a time such as the present, it is obvious that under normal conditions the demands they have to make upon the rate-payers will be considerably in excess of the levies that are now imposed. Hitherto no one has been sufficiently bold as to claim that the employment of blind persons in the special workshops is an economic proposition, and it would be difficult, if not altogether impossible, to substantiate such a contention: indeed, the 54 workshops for the employment of the blind established throughout England and Wales, cost more *per capita* than the scales of assistance available for the maintenance of those who are classified as unemployable. It would be unwise, however, to conclude that such workshops should be closed because they are rather costly to maintain. There are other important issues involved which cannot be lightly dismissed because the economics of our industry fail to yield the financial equilibrium necessary to the proper conduct of sound business undertakings. Nevertheless, in times such as those through which we are passing every well-equipped workshop throughout the country should be able to give a much more satisfactory account of itself than has hitherto been possible, for the elimination of foreign competition and the high prices charged for commodities now ruling must of necessity result in the payment of higher earnings and in appreciably higher gross profits. It may well be, however, that those gross profits are completely whittled away by heavy overhead charges that have to be encountered in the management of workshops for the blind, and it therefore behoves those who are responsible for the conduct of such establish-

ments to see that their unproductive labour is registered at as low a level as possible compatible with general efficiency.

One of the great weaknesses with which we are confronted is to be found in the fact that usually our employment centres, compared with other factory undertakings, are small, and because of this fact managerial expenses have to be multiplied over and over again. If the workshop for the blind is to justify its existence in the future, it can only be by very considerably enlarging the unit of organisation and by correspondingly reducing the costs of administration. It must not be assumed, however, that we are here contending that there is anything so fundamentally objectionable in the management of workshops for the blind as to convey the impression that such management abounds in abuses: that certainly is not the case, for having regard to the salaries and wages obtaining, there is nothing radically wrong or extravagant that can be charged against the administrations.

If we were planning anew, with only one administration, say, a central government, to consult, we would never dream of setting up small, uneconomic groups here, there and everywhere, each trying in its own peculiar fashion to manipulate five or six industries for the purpose of employing a tiny group of handicapped people. We would know at once that such a situation would be untenable. As we have pointed out elsewhere, the workshop for the blind is a product of the goodwill and interest generally of small communities, and because this has been and is still the practice, we have hitherto been precluded from taking a comprehensive view of the situation and planning on a more ambitious and more economic scale. That phase of private philanthropy is rapidly passing away, however, and a larger communal responsibility is taking its place, so that if the special workshop is to exist in the future, it must be planned on a regional rather than a local basis, and the parochialism which is inevitably associated with the municipal undertaking must disappear, so that the management may be commercially alert and freed of the entanglements which to-day so seriously cripple many of these concerns. It surely is ludicrous, when we reflect on the situation: 54 special workshops in England and Wales, catering for the requirements of less than 4,000 persons. Each undertaking is more or less competing with the other, and each is striving to perform the impossible task of so conducting its departmental

administration as to keep down costs to a minimum, whilst supplying the public with a really good article at a fair price. Steadily, though imperceptibly almost, changes are taking place in the industrial structure. Men of vision are beginning to ask questions about the industrial position, and they are beginning also to see the unwisdom of the present unscientific arrangements. Workshops for the blind, no matter whether they be voluntary organisations or municipal undertakings, are all far from satisfactory, and as at present conceived, are both costly and uneconomic. Wages and subsidies bear no reasonable relationship to each other, whilst the cost of management is out of all proportion to the benefits conferred, not because the boards of management are composed of incompetent persons, as is sometimes alleged, and not because the officials are inefficient, but simply and solely for the reason that tradition has fastened upon small communities obligations which they never ought to have been called upon to discharge. Sooner or later the central government must take a hand in composing present difficulties by compelling the agencies to make a complete reorientation of available facilities. By pooling their resources in such a manner as more adequately to serve the primary object for which the special institutions exist, the true interests of all the agencies would be satisfactorily met. By some such plan the elimination of waste would be achieved and economical management would also be secured. As a preliminary step to regional organisation, the Association of Workshops provides the machinery which, rightly directed, could help to shape the end in view. At all events, the subject is one which should claim their attention, not sometime in the remote future, but now, in order that a well-devised plan can be put into operation when the time is opportune.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

The Rev. Wilfred A. Schofield, Vicar of Krosmont, near Whitby, aged 54. He became blind at an early age, but his great ability enabled him to overcome the handicap. He took his B.A. degree at St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, in 1908, completing his theological training at the Leeds Clergy School. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Southwark in 1909 and served his first curacy at Wimbledon. In 1912 he joined the Rev. C. S. Newell in his work at St. Andrew's, Huddersfield, and came with him to Cleckheaton in 1913. He left

Cleckheaton in 1917 and became curate at St. Maurice's, York, where he met the lady who became his most devoted wife. In 1921 he was appointed to the benefice of Thixendale, a lonely little parish in the heart of the Yorkshire Wolds, and after working there for eleven years was appointed Vicar of Krosmont. A correspondent in the *Cleckheaton Guardian* who, as a youth, had the privilege of assisting Mr. Schofield in a variety of ways, pays affectionate tribute to him as one of the greatest stepping stones to the future progress of the lads who helped him in his work. "He was in every way a great man. I am proud of his inspiration and friendship and I pay honour to his memory."

Dr. Francis Bernard Chavasse, M.C., M.D., M.R.C.P. M.R.C.S., the well-known eye specialist of Liverpool, killed by accident while motoring at Burton Dassett, Warwickshire. He had a distinguished academic career, obtaining first-class honours in the Final Honour School of Physiology, the Derby Prize for Clinical Medicine, and Liverpool University Prize for Clinical Surgery. He served as an Army medical officer in the last war, and afterwards was Surgeon in the Eye Department of the Liverpool Eye and Ear Infirmary, Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital and Lecturer in Ophthalmics at the University of Liverpool. He was particularly well known and respected by those concerned in the blind welfare services of Liverpool, in which he took a keen interest.

BIRD OF PASSAGE

By W. H. COATES

(who is blind)

WHAT are you, melancholy bird—
Voice of harsh sorrow crying
Flying across the marsh?

The lane is filled with the Sun,
But you are an inconsolable spirit;
The sleeping lane is heavy with hawthorn,
But your mysterious weeping
Pricks the brain, O lonely one!

Wild bird—your name?
Your path? What is your story?
When do I follow to the World's end—
Touch that glory of wild wings
In happier springs?

These bogs forbid—their slime.
They clutch with foul molluscal grip;
They clog the feet and suck them down
With greedy slobbering lip.

Only the Wind can pass:
Only the Wind light-footed knows
Your flight beyond the line of willows,
And drives its flock of tenuous whispers
Heedless down the reedy brook
Where you unquiet call.

SELFLESSNESS

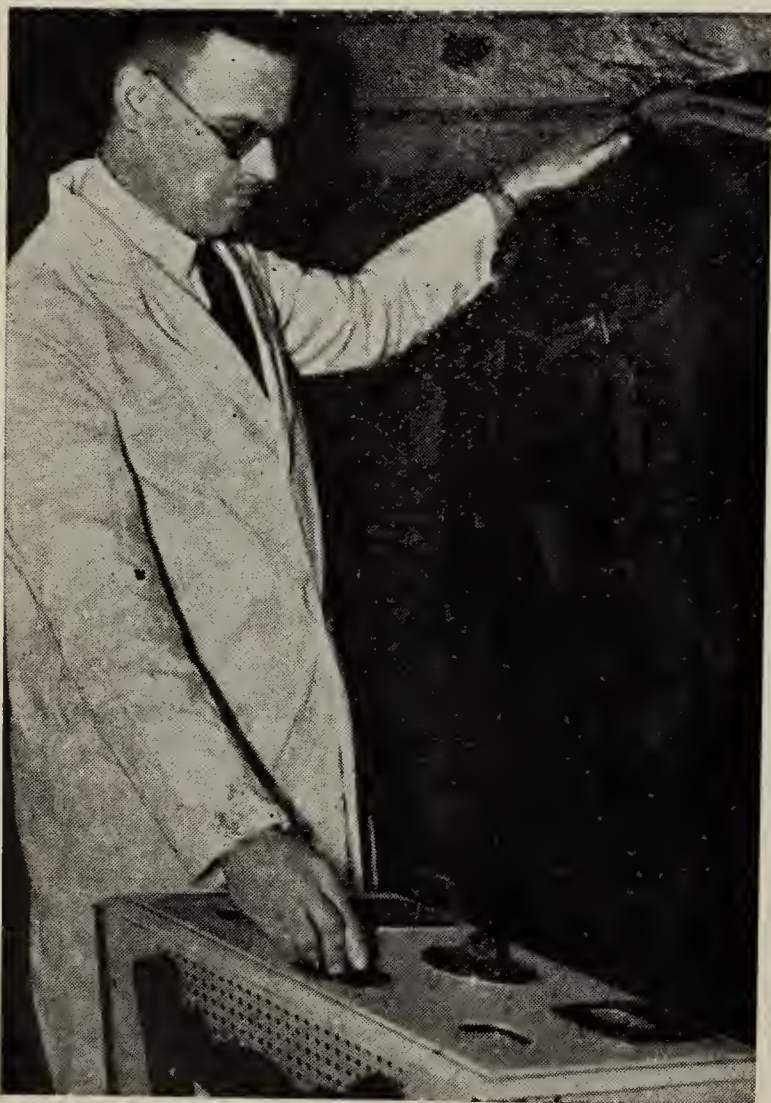
IT is most refreshing in these days to hear of an act of kindness or generosity which has nothing whatever to do with the war. I learned of such an act recently from a blind friend of mine. He told me of a family in the district whom he visited occasionally. They are Welsh people, but their life in England has not made them forget their natural kindness and sincerity of feeling. When last he called on them the daughter of the family had asked him how best she could put to good use a 3s. postal order which she had bought with the money saved as a result of her self-sacrifice during Lent. She had denied herself such pleasures as amusements, sweets and even chocolate when obtainable. Her intention was to send it to a deserving charity, and my friend tried to help with various

suggestions, but she could not convince herself quite where to send it. Then he put forward a suggestion which met with her entire approval. This was that he should be allowed to take the postal order and give it on her behalf to a blind person in his knowledge who he thought would most appreciate it. This was done, and the blind person to receive the gift, a young man, was prevailed upon to do so after some protesting.

Now could there be two better examples of selflessness than the actions of the girl with her self-denial, and the blind man who bore in mind one whose needs he thought to be greater than his own. No, there are no doubts as to the authenticity of this story, for the recipient of the postal order was—myself.

C. H.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND



By kind permission of The Sun Associated Newspapers Ltd., Sydney.

Blind Masseur Treats Horses and Dogs.—The accompanying photograph shows Mr. S. C. Mottershaw, of Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, a blind masseur and diathermic expert, treating a racehorse for muscular trouble. Mr. Mottershaw lost his sight eleven years ago as the result of an explosion while at work. Later he came to England and took his massage examinations at the Massage School of the National Institute for the Blind. Returning to Sydney four years ago, he set up practice, and a couple of years ago tried out treatments on horses and dogs. He was so successful that a big proportion of his time is now taken up attending to animals. Mr. Mottershaw pointed out that when a horse is "blistered" the usual treatment takes at least six weeks, and the consequent loss of condition means another six weeks before the horse can be put back into racing. But one horse treated by Mr. Mottershaw with diathermy was back at work after 12 days and was quite docile while undergoing the treatment.

B.A. Degrees.—Three old Worcester College boys have recently taken their B.A. degrees at Oxford University. They are:—

P. J. Seed (St. John's), 2nd in Jurisprudence.

W. A. Wood (New), 3rd in Modern Greats.

P. R. W. Summerson (Exeter), 3rd in History.

Bachelor of Divinity.—John Stewart Lawton, a blind student at St. Stephen's House, Oxford, and lately of Worcester College, Worcester, and Keble College, Oxford, has after one year's study

passed the General Ordination Examination, and the Qualifying Examination for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, in which he was congratulated by the examiners on the high standard of his work. He hopes to spend the forthcoming year in the preparation of a thesis to complete this work.

Massage Students' Fine War-time Achievement.—Splendid examination results are announced by the Massage School of the National Institute for the Blind, London. Nine candidates were presented for the Massage and Remedial Exercises examinations of the Chartered Society, and all passed. Five, for Anatomy and Physiology; all passed. Seven passed the Electrotherapy examination, which now includes Short

Wave and Ultra Short Wave Therapy and Inductothermy. In view of war-time conditions in London these results are particularly excellent. The written examinations—one occupying six hours—took place in the air raid shelters, and all candidates typed their own papers. For the first time in the history of the School no sighted amanuenses were employed.

The verve and high spirits of the candidates are amusingly illustrated by the following message to the School from one of the newly qualified masseurs: "We are all, I am sure, very grateful to everyone at the School for getting us through, under war conditions. The School should be awarded armorial bearings, with the motto 'Bomb-proof.'"

R E C E N T P U B L I C A T I O N S

Physical Training and the Law.

In "The Physical Training Teacher's Legal Rights and Responsibilities," by Claude E. Bridges (Barrister-at-Law and Assistant Secretary to the Middlesex Education Committee) and Derrick E. Bridges, LL.B., published by Messrs. W. & G. Foyle, 121, Charing Cross Road, W.C. 2, price 3s. 6d. net, the writers deal with negligence, accidents in classroom and gymnasias, on playing fields and swimming baths, and treat also of accidents to instructors in the course of their duties. Mr. Bridges in the Preface explains how his book came to be written, as the outcome of a lecture to Organisers of Physical Education, who having heard the lecture were anxious for more detailed information. His practical experience as Secretary to an Education Committee, combined with his legal knowledge, makes him specially well qualified to deal with the problems raised. His book is well documented, with references to over forty cases, and is intended to help those likely to be implicated in legal proceedings resultant on accidents in gymnasium and playing field; those who study the cases given will gain much useful knowledge, and the book should be of help not only to teachers, but to club leaders, scout masters and others. The physical education of the blind is rightly regarded to-day as not by any means the least important part of the preparation of blind boys and girls for useful and happy citizenship, and those responsible for it should find Mr. Bridges' book of value.

Worcester College Magazine.

The Pimpernel, published annually by Worcester College for the Blind, is half devoted to news of College activities, school successes, news

of old boys and reports of the Boat Club, Swimming Club, Chess Club, Scout Troop, Dramatic Society and Literary and Debating Society, and half to original contributions from past and present boys. The news of College activities once again makes it clear that Worcester College deserves to be regarded as a completely normal Public School, where work and games are in due proportion, and the section that deals with Old Boys shows that Worcester is taking its part in the national effort; one is an official censor of Braille literature leaving this country, another is Signals Instructor in the Home Guard, another a telephonist at a hospital, and yet another a tutor at one of the National Institute's Homes of Recovery. The three original contributions—a short story, a picture of Gamelin, Daladier and Reynaud in prison at Riom, and four delightful parodies of Miss Muffet—all reach a high level. Miss Muffet as it might have been written by the author of "The Shropshire Lad" is worth quoting:—

"When I was two and twenty
I saw my love one day
Upon a tuffet eating
Her bowl of curds and whey.

An oak with sturdy branches
Vaulted above her head:
And there a shrivelled spider
Hung from a silken thread.

I looked up at the oak tree,
A distant church bell rang.
'To-day the spider hangs there,
To-morrow I shall hang.'

The gloomy ending is pure Housman.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Wilts Association for the Care of the Blind.—

The Association celebrated its "coming-of-age" during a year of exceptional activity, owing to the presence in the county of nearly 150 blind evacuees from vulnerable areas, who have been accommodated in two special hostels and in private billets. As the normal register of blind persons is not much over 550, the sudden increase of persons to be cared for to over 700 must have placed no small strain on the workers, both honorary and paid. They are to be congratulated on the way in which they have given the stranger within their gates so heartening a welcome. One worker personally bore the cost of repairing a condemned cottage, so as to make it habitable for a blind man and his family from a bombed area, and there have been many acts of thoughtful kindness.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices given are net prices and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production. They are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dances :

18427	Hutter, B., and Gay, N. Come, Happy Day, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	s. d.	o 6
18424	North, M. Too Lovely for Words, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	o 6	
18425	Stolz, R. Waltzing in the Clouds, <i>Song-Waltz</i>	o 6	
18426	Styne, J. Who am I? <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	o 6	

Songs :

18059	Adams, Stephen. The Holy City, B flat : D—F'	o 6	
18177	Cowen, F. H. The Swallows, G : D—G'	o 6	

MOON BOOKS.

4488-4491	Jesus and Ourselves, by Weatherhead. (<i>Limited Edition</i>)	Vols.	4
4492-3	How to Live the Victorious Life, by Unknown Christian. (<i>Limited Edition</i>)		2

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

ADDITIONS.

Fiction :

Adair, Hazel.	Sparrow Market	Vols.	4
Asch, Sholem.	(Translator, M. Samuel). The Nazarene		12

	Vols.
Bailey, H. C. Bishop's Crime	4
Barnes-Grundy, M. Sally in a Service Flat	4
Beeding, Francis. Not a Bad Show	4
Benson, E. F. Trouble for Lucia	4
Broome, Dora M. Lancashire Folk (Short Stories)	2
Brophy, J. Green Glory	5
Cole, G. D. H. & M. Last Will and Testament	4
Deeping, Warwick. Man Who Went Back	5
Delafield, E. M. Pelicans	6
Duffield, Anne. High Heaven	3
Eberhart, M. G. Patient in Room 18	4
Eberhart, M. G. White Cockatoo	4
Flaubert, Gustave. (Translator, Eleanor Maxwell). Madame Bovary	6
Farjeon, J. J. Fancy Dress Ball	3
Fleming, Peter. Flying Visit	2
Forester, C. S. Brown on Resolution	3
Frome, David. Mr. Pinkerton Has the Clue	4
Gibbs, P. Sons of the Others	4
Heyer, Georgette. The Corinthian	4
Heyer, Georgette. Simon the Coldheart	4
Hichens, R. The Million	3
Holt, Henry. There Has Been a Murder	3
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VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

31st July, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	9
(Seven applications under consideration.)	
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	—
Wavertree House, Hove	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea ..	—
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring ..	2
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay ..	15
Home of Recovery, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth ..	—
(Applications for admission can now be received.)	

HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield ..	3
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ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

Lady would like **The New Beacon** passed on when finished with. Would pay postage. S. D. H., 52, Sackville Gardens, Hove.

HOME TEACHING SERVICE.

Those interested in blind welfare work who aspire to secure appointments are invited to apply as under for particulars of a scheme designed to assist in qualifying them to obtain the requisite Diploma. H. N. Vickerstaff, c/o The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Enclose stamp.)

TO BRAILLE ENTHUSIASTS.

Become word perfect. Equip yourself with notes clarifying the rules relating to lower sign contractions (Grade II). Apply for particulars to H. N. Vickerstaff (address as above) enclosing stamp.

WANTED: COPIES OF LETTERPRESS BOOKS ON BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, offers the original price of 2s. 6d. each for clean copies of the letterpress editions of *Key to the Braille Music Notation*, 1922 (Catalogue No. 6673), and *Elementary Lessons and Exercises in the Revised (1922) Braille Music Notation*, by Watson (Catalogue No. 7351).

COUNTY BOROUGH OF ROCHDALE.

Applications are invited from sighted males for the position of Superintendent Home Teacher of the Blind, at a salary of £300 per annum inclusive of travelling expenses.

Candidates, who must be under 40 years of age, must hold the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind and should have had experience of blind welfare work.

Applications should be addressed to the Director of Education and should be delivered at the Education Office, Townhead, Rochdale, not later than 23rd August, 1941.

HARRY BANN,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall,
Rochdale.

August 15th, 1941

The New
BEACON

Partially sighted or sighted girls wanted as Domestic and Kitchen Helps at Worcester College for the Blind. Apply in writing, enclosing references, to Secretary, Worcester College for the Blind, Worcester.

MAT FOREMAN.

East of Scotland Institution for the Blind requires the services of a fully qualified Mat Foreman capable of taking complete charge. Apply with full particulars, stating age, experience, wages required, references, etc., to Box No. ES, c/o THE NEW BEACON, 224-8, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind: Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age. Exceptions to this rule may be made during the war.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL. HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Appointment of Home Teacher for the Blind.

The Council invite applications from women (sighted) for the above appointment. The person appointed will be on the staff of the County Medical Officer, and will be required to pass a medical examination and to contribute to the Superannuation Scheme. The person appointed must provide her own car. Salary £150 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £200 per annum, plus cost-of-living bonus and travelling allowance according to scales. Commencing salary may be varied according to experience.

Applications stating age, qualifications and experience, to be sent to the County Medical Officer, County Offices, Hereford, on or before the 25th August 1941. Envelopes to be endorsed "Home Teacher."

CITY OF CARDIFF.

Blind Persons Acts, 1920 and 1938.

Applications are invited for the post of Female Home Teacher and Visitor of the Blind. Candidates must be sighted or partially sighted and not over 50 years of age. The person appointed, if not holding the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, will be required to pass the examination within two years from date of appointment, and must have a knowledge of Braille and Moon types and the administration of the statutory provisions relating to Blind Persons, and also practical ability to teach home occupations suitable for the blind. She will be required to devote her whole time to the duties and to act under the direction of the Secretary and Manager of the Cardiff Institute for the Blind. Salary £160 per annum rising by annual increments of £10 to £200 per annum, plus War bonus (at present £12 per annum). Forms of application may be obtained from the Deputy Clerk to the Blind Persons Act Committee, City Hall, Cardiff, to whom they must be returned together with copies of three recent testimonials not later than 8th September, 1941.

D. KENVYN REES,
Town Clerk.

City Hall, Cardiff.
23rd July, 1941.

LONDON ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, BARCLAY WORKSHOPS BRANCH, 19-21, Crawford Street, London, W.1.

Teacher wanted for flat and round machines. Knowledge of Braille essential. Reply stating salary required to Branch Superintendent.



By kind permission of the Evening Standard Co., Ltd.,
and Mr. David Low.

BRaille PANDAS

The "Penguins" of the Blind World

No. 45.—If Hitler Comes, A Cautionary Tale, by Douglas Brown and Christopher Serpell. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

This remarkable book is a picture, painted from life, of what would happen to us if the Germans won. It reads like a true historical picture of England with Hitler and the Nazis in control. It is movingly and skilfully written; it is appallingly life-like and uncannily vivid.

No. 46.—Room Number Six, by J. Jefferson Farjeon. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

Simon Smith was unemployed and optimistically answered an advertisement for a confidential job. He got the job, prosaically that of a traveller in gum, but then he met Millie Brown and life became one terrific adventure. A most enjoyable thriller by a born story-teller.

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

The New BEACON

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THE BLIND CHILD AND THE FAMILY

By ELIZABETH W. WHITEHEAD.

“THE Family as a social unit must be safeguarded.”

This decision on the part of the Christian leaders of our country, one of the five social points which they have added to the five peace points put forward by his Holiness, Pope Pius XII, involves a problem of special interest to us in its application to the blind. Is it, in fact, possible for the blind child to take his place as an integral part of this social unit, or can he prosper only by his withdrawal from it?

“Give me a child until he is seven,” St. Ignatius of Loyola is reputed to have said, “and you can have him for the rest of his life.” Many a teacher of the blind, struggling with a new pupil, has acknowledged with a sigh the truth in that remark. The recent tendency has therefore been to advocate the reception of a blind child into an institution at the earliest possible age, in fact during his babyhood. That the scheme has met a very real need is undeniable. Must we, then, conclude that the blind child cannot take his place with his seeing brothers and sisters in the family? The question is not whether an institution is the best place for some blind babies, but whether it is the best place for all. There is a danger in our tendency to consider that because a scheme works fairly well and has the advantage of simplicity it should be applied uncritically in every case. But this is to confuse what is best in some cases with what is best in itself. We have to decide whether the Christian view of the family in relation to the blind is an impossible ideal, or whether it is an ideal, difficult indeed of attainment, yet not in itself impossible, and well worth striving for.

For my own part I shall, I think, never cease to be thankful that my childhood was spent at home. When I reached the age of five my parents were anxious to send me to school, and I was eager to go, but no beds were available at the institution near our home. The superintendent strenuously opposed the idea, tentatively suggested by my parents, that I should enter the school as a day-pupil, but my parents remained unconvinced. They asked the headmaster whether he thought that residence was necessary and his reply was “not where the home is

good." By some yet unexplained miracle his view carried the day. His view, in my opinion, represents the reasonable attitude towards the problem. When the home is suitable let the blind child stay there as long as he can consistently with the requirements of his schooling. It is, however, much better for the blind baby to live in an institution than in a home where he cannot be given the necessary care and training. But before taking so important a step as the removal of a baby from his home we should first make sure that the home really is unsuitable and cannot be made suitable. For instance, a tenement house is even more unsuitable for the upbringing of a blind child than it is for other children, but if that is the only difficulty and the parents want to keep their baby with them, it would be better for the local authority to try to find a home on a new housing estate. If the trouble is that the father is unemployed and the child's mother cannot care for him because she must go out to work to augment the family income, it would be better to find the father work than to place the child in an institution. It is better much to get to the root of a problem when we can than to apply superficial remedies.

The extreme view may well be represented by the superintendent of my first school. When I had spent eight years there as a day-pupil my parents decided to send me to the Royal Normal College. I was now quite as keen to go to a boarding-school as I had previously been to go to school, although under no circumstances would I have submitted to being made a boarder at my first school. To my father's great astonishment he received a letter from the local authority asking why he had removed his daughter from the school and enclosing another letter which they had received from the superintendent who said that "the father took the child away" without letting him know of his intention. Fortunately my father was able to produce the superintendent's reply to his letter, written some weeks before the end of the term, announcing his decision to take his daughter away from the school at the end of the summer term. The important point, I think, lies in the phrase "*the father took the child away*"; not "Mr. X took his daughter away" or even "the father took *his* child away," but a phrase which indicates as plainly as words can that "the father" had nothing whatever to do with "the child." In other words, the parents of a blind child are unfortunate necessities to be disposed of as quickly and as completely as possible. Happily for me my parents absolutely refused to share this view and continued to take a lively interest in my education. I could not have received my education without the aid of my schools (the Royal Normal College

in particular); I would not have received it without the aid and interest of my family.

It may be objected that when a blind child is brought up in his family it is practically impossible to avoid defective training. Undoubtedly the parents of a blind child need special help if they are to perform their task with any degree of success. Their training should be begun as early as possible; this is part of the work of the home visitor, but it is almost a department in itself, and might very well be undertaken by a specially trained blind woman. The National Institute's Bulletin on the care of blind babies is an excellent guide, both comprehensive and simple, and should be in the hands of every parent of a blind child. Parents might also be much helped and encouraged by contact with blind people, especially those who have succeeded particularly well in overcoming their handicap. But we should not forget that there are defects in the training of all children. Faced with so enormous a task as the education of a child, every good parent and every good teacher is almost painfully aware of how much she must leave undone, how many imperfections there will be in her work; she can but resolve to do her best. Moreover it is sometimes forgotten that an institution training is also subject to faults varying from the very grave to the scarcely perceptible. The faulty training of the family is shown up by life in an institution, but the faulty training of the institution is revealed only when and if the child emerges into a wider sphere. We do not hear very much about the defects of an institution training; they are perhaps less striking and less serious but nevertheless they exist. In an institution a child is deprived wholly or partially of the affection which is the vital force in family training.

Sometimes when a child leaves a family in which it has lived a very normal life to enter an Institution for the Blind it becomes far more conscious of its blindness, realises it, in fact, for the first time, and in consequence there is a marked diminution in confidence; no harm is done provided the trouble is recognised and dealt with. It is necessary that the child at a certain stage in its development should realise the fact of its blindness in order that it may deliberately set out to overcome the handicap, but, having fully realised wherein he is different from other people, he must be taught to forget it or rather to forget both himself and his handicap; this is where institution training sometimes fails. The result is a painful self-consciousness, especially noticeable in the blind adolescent. Other defects are peculiarities of diction, awkwardness and inability to mix in ordinary society and to take part in general conversation, and the tendency to ignore the

presence of seeing people. Abnormalities of behaviour tend to develop which do not appear particularly strange when all are blind but which strike the outsider very forcibly; for instance, at my first school a child who wished to identify its fellow would feel her all over saying "Who's this?" a practice, I remember, which caused me acute discomfort. I suppose I should cheer-

(To be concluded.)

fully have adopted this practice myself had I not known through contact with my family that it was simply not done in ordinary society. The truth, I would suggest, is that only by co-operation between family and institution founded on good will and mutual respect can the maximum benefit be reaped and a balanced outlook obtained.

HOME NEWS

Interesting Development in Workshop Management.—An interesting development in the relationship between a Local Authority and a Voluntary Institution has arisen which is perhaps unique. It is the outcome of a set of circumstances brought about primarily by the war. In the first place there existed a workshop which was conducted by a County Council. This was built on modern lines about six years ago, with sufficient accommodation to provide for the County cases it was estimated would require workshop places within a period of about ten years. When war broke out there were still about 50 per cent. of the places unoccupied as the demand for places had not reached the figure estimated at the time the building was planned. During the heavy raids on London last autumn, the headquarters of a Voluntary Institution was severely damaged, and one of its important departments was rendered completely useless. The Management, knowing of the available space in the County Workshops, asked if this might be placed at their disposal. The request was very sympathetically considered by the Chairman of the Blind Persons Act Committee who saw in this request the opportunity of putting into full use the workshops he had striven to establish. It was therefore eventually agreed that the best solution to the problem would be for the workshops to be managed and controlled by the Voluntary Institution, whose wide experience of such matters could be brought into play to the advantage of the County Council, whose comparatively few workers were under the direction of a Committee lacking the experience of dealing with the intricacies involved in conducting a workshop for the blind.

In the interests, therefore, of the blind workers and with a view to placing the workshops on a more economic basis, the County Council decided to ask the Voluntary Institution to accept the responsibility of employing its blind workers and to provide for any other County cases that might eventually qualify for admission to the workshops. To make this possible it was also

decided to lease the buildings to the Voluntary Institution for a period of twenty-one years, subject to the right of the Council to terminate the tenancy within twelve months after the conclusion of hostilities by giving not less than six months' notice. The Voluntary Institution agreed to this proposal, and also to admit to its Committee of Management three representatives of the County Council.

The action of the County Council has thus materially helped a Voluntary Institution to rehabilitate its workers rendered unemployed by the war, and at the same time has given the Institution the opportunity of serving the blind over a wider area and of rendering a valuable service to the Blind Persons Act Committee of the County Council.

The parties to this agreement are The Bedfordshire County Council, and the Incorporated Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, 257/8, Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1.

As there has of late been a tendency towards the municipalisation of workshops for the blind, does one see in this arrangement the beginning of a change in this policy? This innovation will undoubtedly be watched with great interest.

Consumer Rationing.—Further to the announcement on this subject given in the July issue of *THE NEW BEACON*, the Board of Trade have asked the National Association of Workshops for the Blind, Inc., to collect on their behalf all coupons received from customers in exchange for goods whose sales are regulated by coupons. A Form of Return has been drawn up for this purpose, and members of the Association are required to complete this Form and send it with the appropriate number of coupons to the Secretary of the Association for the period 1st June to 31st August, 1941, and thereafter monthly. It should be noted that members should not send coupons direct to the Board of Trade. Copies of the approved Form will be supplied to members of the Association as soon as available.

Memorial Tablet to Blind Organist.—The Vicar of Aldford, the Rev. Charles Austin, has been granted a faculty to erect a tablet in the chancel arch as a memorial to Mr. J. W. Scolah, the blind musician who was for 60 years organist at the church.

Bristol Blind Professor's Brilliant Idea.—Professor C. M. MacInnes, Reader in Imperial History at Bristol University and one of the blind members of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, was the originator of a scheme whereby ten Oxford Colleges agreed to receive as guests during the University's summer vacation as many men, women and children from the worst bombed areas of Bristol as they could accommodate. The guests arrived in groups of 80 for a fortnight at a time and were looked after by voluntary helpers and the College "scouts." Many of the dons remaining in Oxford because of the vacation courses helped to entertain the guests.

K-H News-Letter.—From September 11th the name of the *K-H News-Letter* will be altered to the *National News-Letter*. This well-known weekly periodical has long been published in Braille by the National Institute, and the Braille edition will now, of course, conform to the change in title.

Pensions for Manx Blind.—At a meeting of the Council last month, Deemster Cowley, moving the first reading of a Bill to extend to pensionable blind persons the benefits of the Supplementary Pensions, as now given to Old Age Pensioners, said it was regrettable to find that blind folk receiving 10s. a week were dependent upon Poor Relief, and this state of affairs should not be allowed to continue.

Altogether, about 43 persons would be affected and the cost would amount to about £600 a year.

This Bill would provide the minimum of 9s. 6d. additional pension to persons over 40 years of age, leaving the social services to be paid for out of other resources.

The Bill was carried through all its stages and passed by the Council.

Swansea Institution's New Premises Opened.—The Mayor of Swansea, Councillor Thomas James, on 25th August declared open the residence, 116, Eaton Crescent, which the Swansea and South Wales Institution for the Blind has leased for the duration of the war, with an option to purchase, for the housing of its activities. It will be remembered that the premises of the Institution were severely damaged by enemy action early in the year.

The Mayor expressed pleasure that the Committee had seen its way to that stage in

its effort to re-establish the Institution, which was an important one among those for the blind in the kingdom.

There would be tremendous work ahead, because, he predicted, there would be large numbers for whom to cater, and so he urged that they should not think too long in terms of temporary premises, but do their best to remove obstacles to the provision of a new institution.

Alderman A. R. Ball, calling on the Mayor, spoke of the opening as going "some little way" towards re-establishment. The German air attack had not destroyed the spirit of the members of the Board of Management or lessened interest of the blind themselves in the welfare and restarting of the Institution.

It might be thought that there had been undue delay, but actually this was the third premises for which they had negotiated. They had made a start with all departments except brush-making and mat-making, and in these they hoped to restart within a fortnight. The greatest difficulty had been in obtaining sighted overseers.

Talking-Book Machines Free of Purchase Tax.—The Treasury have given notice that they propose to make an Order directing that Purchase Tax shall cease to be chargeable in respect of gramophones designed specially for the reproduction of gramophone speech records for the blind.

Pavement Obstructions.—A move to clear our pavements of iron standards, rubbish bins, pillar boxes and crossing beacons is being made by the National Institute for the Blind. It has brought the matter to the notice of the Royal Institute of British Architects as related to the reconstruction of our damaged cities.

"These uncompromising obstacles" to pedestrian traffic affect the comfort and safety of 74,000 blind people, the National Institute says, causing them mental bewilderment and often physical pain. Town-planners, in the interests of sighted people as well as of the blind, could surely "devise some better arrangement for that post-war world to which we look forward so intently."

Massage Bureau, London.—On the envelope of a letter, apparently addressed to the Massage Bureau, London, the Post Office wrote "Try 204, Great Portland Street, W.1." The letter accordingly arrived at the offices of the National Institute's Massage Clinics. But the letter, when opened, was found to be a communication intended for the Marriage Bureau, and, of course, re-addressed correctly. The interesting point, to us, of this amusing episode is that the Postal Authorities evidently associate all things concerning Massage with the blind exponents of the gentle art.

OPENING OF AMERICA LODGE, TORQUAY A Home of Recovery for War-blinded Civilians

IT was perhaps a daring thing in the present circumstances to have an official opening of America Lodge; but it was amply justified. The function, which took place on Saturday, August 16th, was arranged in order to make an opportunity of expressing publicly the gratitude of the blind to the British War Relief Society of America, which had, in the most open-hearted way, met the whole cost of acquiring the house and maintaining it for a considerable period.

Some two hundred friends and well-wishers of the Home attended. A modest platform had been erected by the front door, and here were gathered Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., Chairman of the National Institute for the Blind; His Worship the Mayor of Torquay; Lord Mamhead, D.L., J.P.; Mrs. Knapp, Chairman of the Institute's Homes Committee; Major McMahon, a member of the Institute's Council and Secretary of Gardner's Trust for the Blind; the Rev. W. Aitchison, Chairman of the House Committee, Court Grange, Abbotskerswell; Miss G. Bertram; Mr. W. McG. Eagar, Secretary-General of the National Institute; Miss Norman, Matron of the Home, and others.

Sir Beachcroft Towse opened the proceedings by explaining the purpose of the Home. He said that he had just received with the utmost gratification a message from Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, and he called upon the Secretary-General to read it. It ran as follows:

"Her Majesty commands me to tell you how deeply interested she is in hearing that you have found such a good house at Torquay to be used as a Home of Recovery and Rest for the blind. It seems a wonderful way of using the munificent gift from the British War Relief Society of the U.S.A. The Queen sends all possible good wishes to those who have worked to equip America Lodge, to those who will work there in the service of their blinded fellow-countrymen and women, and to the guests. Her Majesty feels that those who come to America Lodge for rest and recovery after all that they have suffered deserve all possible help, material and spiritual, and sends them very many thoughts and blessings."

Just before he spoke, Sir Beachcroft Towse was told that the voluntary workers, a considerable number of whom had already given invaluable assistance to the Home, wished to present a bouquet to the Matron, in token of their appreciation of her work and the affection

she had already won from them. The presentation was made by Master Adrian Charles, son of one of the voluntary workers.

Sir Beachcroft then asked Lord Mamhead to declare the Home open, and he did so by raising the American flag which, with the Union Jack, was draped over the portico of the house. Beneath the Stars and Stripes a dedicatory tablet was revealed, which ran:—

AMERICA LODGE
THE GIFT OF
THE BRITISH WAR RELIEF SOCIETY
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE BRITISH BLIND.

May 1941.

After the unveiling, Lord Mamhead made a speech which, like Sir Beachcroft's own, won all hearts; and Mr. Gilbert Carr, Honorary Secretary of the Advisory Committee in England of the British War Relief Society of America and Director-General of the American Ambulance of Great Britain, acknowledged the cordial thanks and appreciation which had been expressed to his Society by Sir Beachcroft Towse and Lord Mamhead. He said:—

"We hear a lot about freedom these days; so much so that constant repetition tends almost to give a negative value to the sound. And the same thing applies to those many references to the 'brotherhood' which binds lovers of freedom everywhere. These are sweet sounds, but sweet sounds can only be of positive value if uttered in the right spirit. Tinkling cymbals may be very pleasant to the ear, but the cymbalist must realise that his audience needs more than music to keep body and soul together."

"We can avoid the pompous vanity of reiteration only if we back our words with action—action in unselfishly rendering to one another all the help in our power. It was in such a spirit that the British War Relief Society of America chose to help the war-blinded civilians of this country; men and women and even children, who have been so cruelly mutilated in their brave stand for that freedom, that blessed freedom, for which the British people seem so ready and willing to make even the final sacrifice. In that spirit, too, we admire this work of the National Institute for the Blind, whose aim is to loosen the shackles of blindness and to lead these war-blinded civilians from darkness into the spiritual light of hope and independence."

"It is said that Americans are fond of slogans. That may be so. We can at least appreciate a

good slogan when we hear it; and I know of none better than that of the National Institute for the Blind—'Help the blind to help themselves.' I say I know of none better, because it seems so exactly to express the meaning of these Homes of Recovery for the rehabilitation of the people who have lost their sight in this war of defence against a barbarous and merciless foe.

"In acknowledging the thanks expressed here to-day, I speak on behalf of that great body of simple, warm-hearted, friendly people all over the United States, members of the British War Relief Society, whose friendliness toward you, whose interest in you, whose desire to be of help to you, and whose admiration of your great courage and determination, makes this gift possible. I speak

on their behalf also when I express the hope that here in the peace of America Lodge the wounded will be quietly helped to adjust themselves to their changed circumstances, taught to enjoy through their fingers the literature they formerly read through their eyes, trained for a profession or trade, and so be prepared for a life happy with useful service. May God bless this House."

A vote of thanks to Lord Mamhead was expressed by His Worship the Mayor of Torquay, who also welcomed the visit to Torquay of Mr. Carr, Sir Beachcroft Towse and other distinguished guests. The vote was seconded by Mrs. Knapp and the ceremony ended with three genuinely British cheers for our American friends and helpers, and the singing of "God save the King."

FOREIGN NEWS

A Missionary Helps Chinese Blinded Soldiers.—Mr. Hermann Becker, a missionary in Chihkiang, Hunan Province, is devoting his time to the comfort of blind soldiers. Mr. Becker has been a missionary in China for 30 years, and recently he was called upon to help more than 300 Chinese soldiers who had been blinded in battle.

Most of the soldiers are young and strong, but they are comparatively helpless.

The missionary went along to see these men one day and was touched by their plight. He decided to do something about it.

He went to many places in China asking for help. More than anything he wanted the men to read and write the Mandarin Union Braille system. He found a blind teacher who knew the system, and he is now teaching the soldiers.

The blind teacher is at present embossing hundreds of sheets of paper as a primer for his pupils, who are finding a new hope of life.

Mr. Becker's headquarters are at the China Inland Mission, Chihkiang, and he wants people in any part of the world to send him any books

printed in the Mandarin Union Braille system.

American Workers for the Blind Express Admiration of British Blind.—Following the reading, by Mr. A. C. Ellis, of the paper on "The British Blind in War-time," contributed by Mr. W. McG. Eagar, Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind, at the Annual Convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, held at Indianapolis from the 7th to the 11th July, the Convention adopted a Resolution, as follows:—

"Whereas, the members of the American Association of Workers for the Blind in convention assembled at Indianapolis, Indiana, July 7-11, 1941, were greatly moved by Mr. W. McG. Eagar's paper 'The British Blind in War-time,'

"Be it Resolved, that the Secretary-General be instructed to send a letter to Mr. Eagar expressing the admiration of this body for the courageous spirit exhibited by the blind and workers for the blind in Great Britain during the present most trying circumstances."

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Worcester College Scholarship.—Anthony Norton, of Paignton, a pupil at the West of England School for the Blind, has been awarded a scholarship tenable at Worcester College for the Blind.

Blind Organist's Success.—Mr. John Busbridge has obtained his Associate Diploma at the July examinations of the Royal College of Organists. A former student of Worcester College for the Blind, he is now studying at the

Royal College of Music and holds a temporary organ post at Bagshot, Surrey.

Blind Girl Pianist Gets Second Highest Marks in Britain.—In the recent examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Miss Anne Burrows, a blind girl of Aldridge, who until last Christmas was a pupil at Chorleywood College, gained the second highest marks in the British Isles (140 out of 150) for piano playing in the final grade, and

has been awarded the Silver Medal status. Miss Burrows is 19 and was born in Canada, where she lived until eight years ago, proceeding to Chorleywood College to continue her education. She hopes to enter for a scholarship next April. She can type, ride a horse and swim, and holds a certificate for life-saving. She lost her sight at the age of five years.

A Fine War Effort.—Though blind since childhood and paralysed in the legs, Miss Olive Allsopp of Burnley Place, Rosyth, is one of the

most untiring war-workers. Her sunny nature has endeared her to all her friends, neighbours, and acquaintances.

She knitted 107 scarves, 10 pullovers, two pairs of socks, one pair of gumboot socks, two pairs of mittens, and two helmets for members of the fighting forces in the first year of the war. Since January this year she has given 20 helmets, 14 pairs of gloves, 13 scarves, six pullovers, four pairs of socks, and two pairs of gumboot socks.

THE HOME TEACHING SERVICE Training and Refresher Courses and Conferences

By J. CHALLINOR,
Secretary, Northern Counties Association for the Blind

THE Editorial in the August issue of THE NEW BEACON stresses the value of Training and Refresher Courses for Home Teachers and instances the results of the Training Course recently established by the Southern Regional Association for the Blind.

That Association is to be congratulated on taking up, to such good effect, this branch of Blind Welfare Work, the importance of which cannot be too strongly emphasised; but it would be well not to lose sight of the work which has been going on in this direction over a long period of years.

Training Courses for unqualified and prospective Home Teachers of the Blind were first organised by the Northern Counties Association for the Blind fifteen years ago when, in response to a suggestion of the Ministry of Health, a course was held, under the auspices of the Association, at Henshaw's Institution, Manchester. Since then, courses have been organised yearly without interruption during which some 240 students have attended, facilities being provided at Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester.

The great majority of these students obtained the Home Teaching Certificate at the first attempt and, except on very few occasions, the first and second places in the examination have been secured by candidates who attended these courses.

Carrying responsibility, as it does, for personal service to the greater proportion of individual blind persons, it is essential that neither effort nor expense should be spared in securing the greatest possible facilities for training the right type of person, and not the least important factor in the arrangements for the courses organised by the Northern Counties Association is the careful selection of candidates encouraged to go forward.

Recruitment to the Home Teaching profession, calling by its very nature, for personnel at an age a little in advance of that usual for entrants to training for most professions, is always a

difficult problem; but it is being solved as the consistent upward trend of the standard of the service shows, and although it is difficult to effect innovations in war time, progress is being made on lines which will become more evident in better times.

The Refresher Course is common to all professions and its value has been established beyond possible doubt. The Northern Counties Association has arranged such courses for employed Home Teachers yearly since 1929, but has, unfortunately, been compelled to suspend this work during the war as it has been found impossible by employing authorities, to allow Home Teachers to be away from their work for a sufficient period to make the course worthwhile. None the less this is a recognised part of the Association's work, facilities can be offered at any time, and another course will be arranged without delay as soon as Home Teachers can be spared to benefit from it.

The Home Teachers' Conference has been established in the North for many years, and this it has been possible to continue in spite of war conditions. So many of the papers given at these conferences and the discussions arising from them have been published that there is no need to enlarge further on their value to the Home Teacher, who has, more than ever, to fill an exceedingly difficult position.

Attendances at conferences also indicate that employing authorities, no less than the Home Teachers themselves, are alive to the benefits conferred by such meetings.

All these efforts to maintain an adequate service and to raise standards have been in operation over a very long period, and they will be continued without relaxation as, assuming the material necessities of life to be met (and even in that the Home Teacher has a vital part), nothing can contribute more towards the happiness of the blind population than an effective Home Teaching Service.

INDUSTRIAL NOTES

By BEN PURSE.

ALL too frequently in these columns we have to report heavy trading losses that are sustained by Workshops for the Blind, and it is therefore with some degree of satisfaction that we review the past year's achievement of the Liverpool Workshops for the Blind because the trading results were very satisfactory.

The report for the year ending March 31st, 1941, records the fact that orders have been and are being executed on behalf of the Admiralty, War Office, and other Government Departments; in fact, we are told from other sources that 94 per cent. of the work now being performed is being executed on behalf of the Government and Local Authorities. The number employed on March 31st was 151. Economic earnings of blind workers amounted to £12,501 6s. 4d., to which was added, in augmentation of wages grants, £9,398 7s. 8d., making a total of £21,899 14s. 0d., to which the Charity contributed £3,000. Thus the average wage of the individual blind worker was approximately £145 per annum.

Annuities to retired workers (10 in number) amounted to £473, the deficit of £148 being met from the Charity Fund.

The new Building Fund at March 31st, 1940, was £2,447 1s. 1d., to which a further sum of £1,000 has since been added. Damage to the old buildings as the result of enemy action has been rather serious, and in order to enable the work to be carried on it was necessary to effect certain repairs involving an expenditure of £607 0s. 6d., but it is contemplated that after the war the further sum of £1,800 will have to be spent in order that more complete revonation may be made.

The balance sheet shows that the total assets of the Institution are valued at approximately £94,509 17s. 9d., which include investments, land, buildings, machinery, etc. Stock in hand at April 1st, 1940, was valued at £8,812 10s. 3d. At March 31st, 1941, the value of the then disposable stock was said to be £7,517 19s. 7d. Sales during the past year amounted to £59,590 19s. 9d., including Purchase Tax, the largest item being £19,768 10s. 5d. for factored goods. Sales of *Brushes* amounted to £18,020 19s. 2d.; *Baskets*, £8,955 16s. 7d.; *Mats and Matting*, £8,697 7s. 4d.; *Upholstery*, £4,148 6s. 3d. The gross profit, including the receipt of discounts, amounted to £11,175 11s. 10d.

Unproductive wages to blind workers amounted

to £504 17s. 11d., and to sighted workers £873 15s. 5d. National Health and Unemployment Insurances, £737 13s. 2d. Salaries, £1,756 17s. 5d. Rates and Insurance, including War Risks Insurance, £1,075 14s. 8d. Repairs and alterations to Machinery, including Reserve for Deferred Repairs, £2,179 3s. 3d. Profit transferred to General Charity Fund, £698 18s. 11d.

It is obvious from a perusal of the foregoing figures that the affairs of the organisation have been very economically administered, and we tender to all concerned our warmest congratulations on results that are so eminently satisfactory.

It has often been urged that Institutions for the Blind should not engage in factoring commodities which they could not undertake to manufacture, but no reasonable objection can be urged to this policy so long as it in no way interferes with the employment of blind persons. Quite the contrary result may often ensue because this policy does indirectly induce the employment of a larger number of non-seeing persons than would otherwise be the case, and it is certain that the policy pursued by the Liverpool Workshops for the Blind largely increases the gross profit resulting to the organisation and ultimately adds to any net profit which the Institution may in consequence derive.

The number of blind persons on the Liverpool register at March, 1941, was 1,537 and in the neighbouring borough of Bootle, 160. During the past year 165 new cases have come under the care of the Society.

The Institution Committee, acting on behalf of the Liverpool Corporation, administers the grants to unemployable blind persons and their dependants, and during 1940-41 these amounted to £57,861 7s. 0d.

Here we have yet another indication of the rapid growth of public expenditure on Services to the Blind. A few short years ago the expenditure of the Liverpool Corporation and that of other Local Authorities was a negligible amount. It is to-day certain that the combined expenditure of Local Authorities in England and Wales exceeds £2,500,000 per annum.

Supplementary Old Age Pensions.

ERRATUM. In the article on this subject on page 112 of our July issue, the statement is made that with regard to capital other than War Savings an amount of less than £50 is disregarded, on £50 or more 1s. a week will be taken into account for the first £50.

This statement was based upon a Post Office Circular, which was incorrect. The amount to be disregarded is not £50, but £25, and a new circular has now been issued putting the matter right.

INSIGHT ON THE DEAF-BLIND

NO one whose whole way of thinking and of acting has been governed by the possession of the five senses can comprehend exactly the state of mind, the outlook, and the mental processes of those who are without sight and hearing. But a degree of comprehension can be attained by continuous contact with deaf-blind people and intense and painstaking study of their reactions to all concrete and abstract occurrences. The approach to such study is perhaps the most important part of it. The begetter of it should be a burning, overwhelming desire to bring the deaf-blind within the warmth and glow of a happy life, a life hallowed by the cardinal virtues of faith, hope and love and graced with the power of creative work. Coupled with this desire should be the tireless perseverance, the immutable patience and the eager curiosity of the true scientific spirit.

To sympathise with the lot of the deaf-blind is easy, too easy. Sympathy is liable to be so pervasive as to drown the perception of the sympathiser. The problem dazes him. He would like to do something—everything, but the apparent vastness of the obstacles seem to prevent him from doing anything. If he arrives at that timid conclusion, the prickings of his conscience will make him avoid the deaf-blind, and he will end by doing nothing at all.

Sympathy therefore should be quickly harnessed to science. Before dwelling on the awfulness of being unable to see or hear, before allowing his emotions to paint a picture in dead black, he should direct his mind to a cool study of the problems of the deaf-blind. He should ask himself: What are these deaf-blind people like? How do they carry on every day? What do they think about? What do they feel? What is their idea of the alien elements which sweep and surge and sound around them? How do they adjust themselves to conditions which would appear almost to crush the resilience of the human spirit? Such questions as these are the pathways of the pioneer, luring him to the heart of an adventure which must be undertaken with purpose and pursued with zest.

But the intending ameliorator may well ask: How can I best begin to see into the lives of the deaf-blind? We would direct him to a careful study of the two embossed journals, *The Braille Rainbow* and *The Moon Rainbow*, in which the deaf-blind periodically converse with each other and with those concerned in their welfare. These pages contain an almost immediate revelation which is apt to astound. Surely these keen thinkers, these witty writers, these spirited controversialists, these affectionate friends are simply a group of normal men and women, bound close together by kindred interests and kind feelings? Assuredly they are, and the knowledge that they are is the first illumination.

Consider these brief examples. Here speaks keen observation: "The inability of some people to make the effort to speak to the deaf-blind seems to me a curious psychological phenomenon, for it is too common to put down to individual shyness; moreover it has nothing to do, apparently, with intelligence or kindness or the lack of these. Sometimes the most unlikely people plunge right into the manual alphabet without any fuss, while others whom we know to be both intellectual and kind turn white at the gills if they are asked to try. Children are often better at coming forward than their elders."

Here is sound pedagogy: "In the first interview the normal person usually feels more nervous than we do. This is natural enough since he is doing something new and unfamiliar, while we are doing what is second nature to us. It is up to us to put him at his ease by letting him see that we don't in the least mind how slow and clumsy he is at first so long as he will stick to it; that we enjoy the fun of teaching him, and that we would infinitely rather be talked to slowly and imperfectly than not at all."

Can *this* writer be deaf and blind? "Nothing very amusing seems to have happened to me lately, except that I nearly went head first into a big bath of water that had been left on the grass." Do *these* words fit into the conventional picture of futility? "What every deaf-blind person needs is work. He can never be happy without it; therefore, no deaf-blind man or woman should be denied employment without a very good reason."

And is not this fine, in its dignity and wisdom? "Let us beware in expecting too much from our hearing and seeing friends. They need our sympathy and understanding as we need theirs. They have their own lives to live; their own anxieties and cares; their work to do and their sorrows to bear, just as we have ours. Often they may wish to talk to us, but they are too tired to make the effort."

True it is, indeed, as another writer says, that "given a dog's chance, the deaf-blind make a pretty good thing of their hampered lives."

THE EDITOR.

A BLIND MAN'S GARDEN

By TRITONE

I SHOULD like to tell you how and by what stages my garden was made from a worse than unpromising site, but that would require an article in itself. I could devote another to my thatched cottage: five centuries and a half it has stood here, and looked on very varying surroundings. But let me describe for you what were those in the wonderful spring, summer and early autumn of 1939.

It was decided that the garden must be one about which I could find my way unaided, and this suggested something formal—rectangular beds, paths running off from a central walk at right angles, and so on. Very well then, formal it should be, and the Tudor cottage should look out on a garden that owed some of its inspiration to one at Hampton Court.

Gradually it grew, with its pavements of crazy brick and brick herring-bone edges to its many beds. Along either side of the central walk which divides its length, rise the uprights of the rose pergola; stout posts these, straight limbs of trees nine to ten inches across at the butt, tapering to about four at the top; the rods which tie them together across and along are of stout hazel wood, hard and tough, and across and along them are trained the ramblers and climbers that make such a wonderful show and fill the air with their fragrance.

Let us walk from the broad brick-paved terrace under these arches with their thick trusses of blossom, towards the old oak wicket gate at the further end. How shall I guide you? By a trick I learnt in those days before my sight failed, when I went to play at concerts at St. Dunstan's, for all along the pergola runs a rail along which no thorny runners are trained, but on which my hand can drop conveniently. First on our right with the big lavender bush at the corner and reaching to the window of the porch is the lily bed in which first Siberian and Madonna, later Tiger, Longiflorum, Lancifolium, Harrisii, Speciosum and Japanese Auratum rise in varying height and put out their trumpets to the warm sunshine. Just inside the brick edging comes a band of broad azure blue when the grape hyacinths are in bloom. On our left a similar bed where, round the feet of three

standard roses of pink and white, are masses of tulips, Breda, Darwin, Parrot, Rembrandt, Cottage, in a glorious confusion of colour and shape, while overhead the scarlet and gold of climbing roses.

Now turn to the right and up those two steps. Half a dozen paces and the toe of my shoe feels the sharp corner of the edging: quite safe to do so, for the herring-bones, like the paths themselves, are of brick set in concrete, the final solution in the keeping down of too enthusiastic weeds which otherwise would obliterate the very paths themselves. For till this garden was made the ground had lain derelict for forty years; burdock, nettle—Roman as well as British, not much difference in their stings unless the former is the fiercer—docks, plantains, Shepherd's purse, and as many other varieties as Nebuchadnezzar's band, had rioted, flowered and seeded here.

Left now, along the path which divides two long beds bordered by crocuses and, at intervals, standard roses, which again alternate in crimson and gold. On our left more tulips and later, on our right, gladioli in every variety of colour will be blooming. Left again, for our further forward progress is stayed by the Michaelmas daisy hedge which runs across either side of the central path. It grows from six to eight feet high and by September is covered with masses of tiny lavender flowers over which hover a crowd of peacock and tortoiseshell butterflies. Back on the central walk again, still under arches covered with climbing Etoile de Hollande, deep crimson and heavily scented; further along, Paul Scarlet and the creamy yellow of Emily Gray mingle overhead. And now, on either side, long, narrow beds of iris, two feet or more tall, in tints of lilac, rose, gold, and behind these two small lawns. And so to the wicket gate which makes an opening in another hedge but this time of rose bushes in which again the notes of crimson and gold are struck. At their feet in springtime grow hyacinths and double tulips.

So we come out on to the gravel path which leads from the gate round the further side of the garden. So turn left again and along it back toward the house and the length of the

herbaceous border flanked at either end with tall rosemary bushes. Here the edging is of Mrs. Sinkins pinks, and in the border azure delphinium, white foxglove, sky blue borage, antirrhinum and forget-me-not are planted. This is no part of a blind man's garden, for though it is quite safe to let me loose elsewhere to handweed with groping fingers (now, you see the reason for so many bulbs) I cannot trust those same fingers in this border. Touch will not distinguish weeds from seedlings here as I learnt on the day when rashly offering help, as rashly accepted by my wife, I ruthlessly tore up a quantity of choice forget-me-nots and pansies upon whose promise of bloom she was eagerly counting. After the first cry of dismay which arrested me in mid-career, she took it very well. Hasty replanting and watering saved most of them, but I have given that border a wide berth ever since. Opposite this bed more grass in which daffodils, narcissi, silver crocuses and snowdrops bloom and an ancient gnarled apple-tree gives grateful shade above the garden bench. We are walking now past the gable end of the house on our left hand. Along here runs our verandah fronted by our tiny herb garden, and beyond it the rock garden. Only a few of the rocks are real; these big lumps, if you examine them closely, are bonded brickwork tumbled out here on to a heap of builders' rubble when workmen tore them out to expose the inglenook they filled and disfigured. We could not move them, so made a virtue of necessity and hid the unsightly rubble with many barrow-loads of kindly earth: house leek, stonecrop and various small saxifrage were planted and have spread their coloured carpets, almost hiding the brick masses.

We have no stone in the county, so the smaller "rocks" which lie strewn around were made by mixing concrete and pouring it into wooden boxes of various sizes and depths. When the blocks were thoroughly hard they were turned out of their mould, roughly broken with a sledge-hammer and cold chisel and, weathered as they now are and cunningly disposed among the real lumps of stone which friends from time to time brought along in their cars, they have deceived not a few. Around, over and among them grow different Alpines whose tiny flowers make welcome splashes of colour in the spring and whose foliage carries on the sequence into late summer and early autumn, while some are evergreen through the winter. Here and there into deep pockets we poked more hyacinth, daffodil and narcissus bulbs and planted white and purple violets to give us spring perfumes.

Ah, but this rough stone pillar at the further

corner is no make-believe. It took three strong men to place it here among the rock plants. Once it was part of the Bronze Age stone circle which was thrown down when a church, earlier than our present twelfth-century one, was built on its site. Lying alongside this corner-stone is the top stone from an early Norman handmill, its outer circumference broken away, but enough left to show the sharply cut keyway either side of the central hole and the grinding groove. It must have come here by ship from Caen in Normandy. We removed it from all that is left of the foundations of a Norman house which once stood where, later, our cottage was built. Those foundation fragments may even be older, for they are of bonded flint and tile, and it is by no means unusual for us to dig up fragments of Roman tile in the garden. And near by is a gravel pit where was found, in perfect preservation, a Roman tile-maker's kiln, now in a local museum. Turn your back on the rock garden and you face two more borders filled with chrysanthemums, some deep bronze with heads like mops, others tawny, crisply curling, others again Indian red, rose or gold. They are separated by a platform of red Tudor brick on which stands a beautiful bird-bath, a shallow font on a slim pedestal.

So we complete our circuit along the last of my guide-rails, black iron rods set between short white painted wooden posts, up these steps and along the crazy brick terrace, past the latticed windows of verandah, dining room and lounge, into which drifts the scent of the lilies and the honeysuckle round the porch windows, and here we are at the nail-studded oak door. Here we must part. Perhaps later on the Editor will let me invite you to lift the heavy wrought-iron latch with a turn of its stirrup-shaped handle and step down, being careful of the low lintel and your head if you are "more than common tall," into the oak-beamed room with its hooded fireplace, Gothic panelled screen and door, and so over the cottage interior. It must have looked much the same when Henry V returned from Agincourt, and some bowman or man-at-arms came home to our village with his tales of war, as did his ancestors who had marched under the banners of De Vere, Earl of Oxford, or Ferrers, Earl of Derby, to Crécy and Poitiers.

So looked our garden in the days before war came, with its wealth of blossom repeated in the orchard, where apple, purple plum, scarlet, green and golden gage and green-gold bullace flushed bright scarlet with the first autumn frosts, fulfilled in their turn that blossom's promise. And only eight years ago it was a weed-grown waste of derelict land.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Work of the National Library.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Following the appearance, in an earlier issue of *THE NEW BEACON*, of my article, "Some Suggested Developments," comes the splendid news from Miss A. M. Hewer, Secretary and Librarian to the Northern Branch of the National Library for the Blind, that the work embodied in my first suggestion (*viz.*, the publishing in Braille of an Encyclopædia) has been going on steadily for some time, and is now nearing completion. If one could but take a peep behind the scenes at the work which has made possible this announcement, there would be revealed a wealth of forethought, enterprise and industry which, to my mind, is synonymous of all the work undertaken by the National Library for the Blind, in their never tiring efforts to enlighten and entertain the blind.

Though I know how much we all appreciate our books, I sometimes wonder if we ever stop to think just how much we owe to the Committee and staff of the National Library. To me, it is a happy thought that the work of transcribing an Encyclopædia into Braille should emanate from Manchester, for it was during my schooling and training in that city that I had some seven years' happy membership of the Northern Branch of the National Library.

Without fear of contradiction then, I can testify to the kindness, patience and interest always extended to members by the staff of the Library at Manchester. The facilities we members enjoyed (and I guess present members still enjoy) were too numerous to mention; one or two perhaps suffice. On Wednesday evenings the Library would be open till 8 o'clock, in order that those readers who worked in the Workshops or who were in school during the ordinary hours of business could come along and choose a book for themselves; this privilege was a real boon to us in school, for besides our being able to pick and choose our books, it afforded us an evening's recreation. Then there were the innumerable occasions when, through the kindness of the Library Committee, it was possible for us to attend a Hallé Concert free of charge. Opportunities to attend winter lectures on varying subjects were also afforded by the Library Committee, and lastly, but by no means least, there was the annual and much looked forward to event, the Braille Reading Competition, with its attendant features of social intercourse and jollification, when we came into personal contact with the members of the staff to whom we owed so much.

For some time now I have been a member of the London Branch of the National Library, having been transferred when I left the Northern area. Though the distance I live from London prevents me from coming into personal contact with the staff, as I did in Manchester, the service has just the same high standard of efficiency; doubtless, however, those who are fortunate enough to live within visiting distance of the Library enjoy the same amenities and privileges which obtain at the Northern Branch.

Here are a few features of the work done by the National Library for the Blind which surely are significant, and well worth remembering. Since it was founded in a small room at Hampstead, with a stock of some 40 volumes, the National Library for the Blind has grown to its present size, with a stock of some 216,000 volumes, and has a yearly circulation of between 200,000 and 300,000 volumes; about 800 volumes are handled daily in the packing room. In one year alone the voluntary writers produced 1,897 volumes; while blind copyists duplicated 3,290 volumes. Before the war, the Library supplied readers all over the British Empire and abroad, but the circulation is naturally now more limited; no books are now sent abroad, though every effort is made to serve our Empire readers. Truly a proud record, and one to which we blind owe so very much.

No, friends and supporters of the National Institute for the Blind, I am not for one moment forgetting the achievements of that great establishment, but there are others more intimately connected with its work, and therefore more fitted to sing its praises than myself. "How the N.I.B. carried on in war time" is a story now in the making; it will be a tale worth the telling, and already I can see proud editors of our periodicals and other officials jealously vying with each other for the exclusive rights of writing up this grand story which will indeed be Front Page News.

Yours, etc.,

H. R. DRIVER.

The Home Teaching Service.

To the Editor.

SIR,—I have long awaited an opportunity such as you now offer in the columns of *THE NEW BEACON* for suggestions regarding the Home Teaching Service.

Whilst admitting, and appreciating, that very much is being done, and continually improved upon, as regards blind welfare on the whole, my complaint is the very inadequate provision made respecting the means of information, and literature obtainable to assist the prospective home teacher in the preliminary stages. My experience in 1938 was (and I have reason to

believe that this is fairly general) that I did not know where to start, and it was only through the kindness and help of two or three certificated home teachers that I was enabled to gather together the necessary fundamentals on which to commence studying. The home teacher's handbook loaned to me was dated 1935, and although it was a great help, so many alterations had taken place since that year. It is not always convenient, or within the circumstances of all prospective teachers, to attend the Refresher Courses, and as the Ministry of Health requires such a high standard of efficiency for the home teaching services (which I certainly agree is essential), I feel that local authorities should be made responsible in conjunction with the regional bodies to see that at least an up-to-date detailed list of subjects to be studied is obtainable from them at any time, together with advice in printed form re sources to purchase literature and materials. I know these books can be obtained in many directions re Blind Welfare, but as changes are constantly taking place, and are ever likely to, so they should be recorded and added to the list mentioned above and so greatly assist the prospective home teacher. It is quite bad enough to have to study, without the added difficulty of having to flounder around to find out what to study, which would not be if one knew the fountain head for these particulars.

I am now certificated, but, having remembrances of my early struggles, I am writing this with a view to hoping that something will be done to give more assistance in the early stages to prospective home teachers who follow on.

May I add that I heartily agree with "A.K." in your July issue, especially her last paragraph.

Yours etc.,

L. H.

PERSONALIA

MR. HENRY J. WAGG, O.B.E., has been appointed Vice-Chairman of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind in place of MR. R. B. HUGHES-BULLER, C.I.E., C.B.E., who has resigned owing to ill health and continued absence from London.

* * *

MR. TOM REED, F.R.C.O., who is blind, has been appointed deputy organist at Hendon Parish Church, and organist and choirmaster at St. Mary Magdalene, Holder's Hill.

* * *

The HON. W. B. L. BARRINGTON has been elected Joint Honorary Treasurer, with MR. ORMOND A. BLYTHE, of the Joint London Association for the Blind and the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

John Jameson Evans, F.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., of Edgbaston, a leading specialist on eye diseases. For 36 years he was honorary surgeon to the Birmingham and Midland Eye Hospital. He was also honorary ophthalmic surgeon to the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind.

Councillor George Henry Springett, at Greenwich, aged 60. He was one of the two blind members of the Greenwich Borough Council. He was appointed to the Council about 14 years ago, and served on the Works, Public Health, Housing and General Purposes Committees, and was one of the founders of the Greenwich Labour Party.

He was actively associated with movements for the blind, including the National League and the Workshops for the Blind of Kent. From the latter institution he was forced to resign three years ago, after a serious car accident, but remained a representative of the committee.

By trade Councillor Springett was a mattress maker.

Evan Emrys Evans, of Aberdare, aged 71. For two years he was Chairman of the Aberdare Blind Welfare Association, of which he was one of the founders, and subsequently he became the first President and first Life Member of the Association in recognition of his services.

Councillor John William Flanagan, at Bradford, aged 50. Mr. Flanagan had been a member of the Bradford City Council for the past 20 years and was Chairman of the Bradford Blind Persons Acts Committee. In him the blind not only of his own city but throughout the country have lost one of their best friends and a whole-hearted worker in their cause.

A correspondent writes:—

"The late Mr. Flanagan was only fifty years of age at the time of his death, and his youthful appearance and cheerful manner right up to one's last sight of him only a few weeks ago has served to accentuate the shock to his many friends and colleagues, particularly in the North of England. His work was not confined to his immediate surroundings; for many years he had been a member of the Council and Executive of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind and was for three years, in a most critical period, its Chairman. He could always be trusted to introduce interest into any meeting and his contributions to the discussions of the General Council of the Association will for long be remembered with gratitude.

He represented the Northern Counties Association for the Blind on the Executive of the National Institute for the Blind for a long period, and at the time of his death was Vice-Chairman of its General Purposes Committee. But it was naturally in the City of Bradford that he was best known and that most of his efforts on behalf of the blind were seen. The Blind Welfare Service there is sufficient testimony, but he also had the satisfaction of recognition some years ago when the local blind people made a presentation to him in recognition of his devotion to their cause. It is difficult to see how such a man can be replaced, and the sympathy of all his colleagues, and those on whose behalf he gave so much service, will go out to his widow and children in their great bereavement."

Mr. Flanagan was one of the founders of the Society for the Welfare of the Blind in Scarborough and retained a close interest in the organisation.

He had a life-long interest in politics and the Labour movement, and as he was an untiring worker and a racy and witty speaker, his death is a serious loss to the Labour Group on Bradford City Council. He was a prominent figure in Catholic circles and was closely connected with St. Patrick's, Westgate, and St. William's, Ingleby Road.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

North London Homes for the Blind.—Owing to enemy action the Homes in North London were seriously damaged in the autumn of 1940, and the patients have been removed to four houses in or near Bolton. The upheaval that such a move necessarily entailed was fortunately made less of a shock to the aged residents of the Homes by the kindly welcome they received from many newly-found friends in Lancashire, including local clergy and ministers, members of the Red Cross and St. John Ambulance services and the W.V.S. The Report records the death of Mr. Thomas Don, of Highgate, for years one of the most valued friends of the Homes.

Cecilia Home for Blind Women.—The Home has had a rather sad and eventful year, having lost its much-loved Matron, Miss Wallace, by death, and having also to suffer substantial damage by enemy action. Happily, the Home

was unoccupied at the time of the bombing. The Committee has, after long consideration, accepted an invitation to work under the auspices of the Middlesex Association for the Blind, and look forward to years of happy usefulness under the new régime. At present the residents are living at Little Easton and at Cheshunt, but hope that after the War they may find permanent quarters.

Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind.—The Birmingham Institution, which is responsible for the welfare of over 1,900 blind people, has passed through what must have been the most trying year of its long history.

Happily, the arrangements made for the education of its senior boys in an area less vulnerable than Birmingham have worked smoothly, and they are now housed "for the duration" in the country near Bewdley; it is interesting to read that the school has made new friends in its new surroundings, and has even provided an organist and supplemented the choir in the village church, while rural surroundings have enabled the boys to keep poultry and pets. "First-hand experience" which is so valuable a part of the education of the blind is an item on the credit side of evacuation which is not to be despised.

The Institution's Brush department was seriously injured by fire during the year (not, ironically enough, due to enemy action) and a considerable amount of stock was destroyed.

Social centres for the unemployable blind have unfortunately had to be suspended on account of wartime conditions, but the handicraft class is still maintained.

Empire.

Patna Blind School.—The school, founded nearly 20 years ago, now has 34 boys on its Roll; owing to the war, the plan for enlarging the buildings has had to be deferred, but the Managing Committee looks forward in happier times to erecting larger school buildings, acquiring more land for a playground, and building a hostel for girls. Crafts play an important part in the training given, and it is interesting to learn that the chair caning repairs undertaken by the school include those for a number of public organisations. Sports, listening to wireless and scouting activities are among the out-of-school interests. Some comments by visitors to the school and the remarks of Government inspectors show that a good standard is reached. "I was favourably impressed with this school, by its neatness and cleanliness for the most laudable work which it is doing," writes the Director of Public Instruction, Bihar, and the

Headmaster of another school says: "I have seen many hostels in my time but very few as clean and well-kept . . . I was shown some type-writing done by the students. The work struck me as highly encouraging."

National Council for the Blind of Ireland.—The Report for 1940-41 is full of interest, and the many activities of the Council in caring for the blind in and round Dublin (there are now nearly 1,000 cases on the Register) is only part of the story; much of the most valuable work done by the Council is in the counties of Clare, Tipperary, Waterford, Limerick and Cork. The Limerick branch, which is the most recently founded, began its activities in the autumn of 1939, and now has over 450 cases on the Register, who are cared for by a qualified home teacher; social visits, lessons in embossed types and handicrafts, a handicraft class, and the provision of wireless sets are included in the scope of the new branch's activities. One new note occurs in the Clare report, where we are told that the Hon. Secretary has her own willow plantation, and it is hoped that willows will be available for the use of blind workers next year. An excellent photograph of a young blind musician who was a student at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and now is organist at the Augustinian Church of St. John the Baptist, Dublin, is a reminder to the reader of the Report of what can be done by the talented blind man or woman if opportunity is forthcoming.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music are in accordance with a revised schedule of prices for Braille music. They represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production, and are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dance:	s.	d.
18438 Carlton, B., and Warren, B., No. 10 Lullaby Lane, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18439 Carr, M., The day I met His Majesty the King, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18440 Charles, H., and Miller, S., Potato Pete, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18441 Kenny, Kenny and Burke, Dream Valley, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6

Song Book:

18428 National Anthems of the Allies (1940), Book 2, arr. by Bantock—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Greece ..	0	6
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Cathedral Chants.

The National Institute informs prospective purchasers of the Cathedral Chants, recently re-transcribed in Revised Braille, that some delay will occur before all orders can be executed, but they will be taken strictly in rotation as in the case of other reprinted works.

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Per vol.
s. d.

18462	<i>Supplementary List of Talking Books for the Blind, March, 1941.</i> Loose leaf, stiff cover. E.8 ..	net	0	3
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Forthcoming Braille Pandas

No. 46.—Room Number Six, by J. Jefferson Farjeon.	3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.
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Simon Smith was unemployed and optimistically answered an advertisement for a confidential job. He got the job, prosaically that of a traveller in gum, but then he met Millie Brown and life became one terrific adventure. A most enjoyable thriller by a born story-teller.

No. 47.—Carry on London, by Ritchie Calder.	2 vols. 1s. net the set.
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This book is a record of the attitude of the people of London—and all the other "blitzed" towns—of wardens and firemen, rescue squads and demolition workers, Home Guards and plain ordinary citizens, who have surmounted every conceivable crisis and breakdown without waiting for orders and have discovered in themselves qualities of courage and initiative undreamt of. It is a record of amazing heroism, an epic of democracy, of those who are building infinitely more than Hitler's bombs can destroy.

Please Note.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

MOON BOOKS.

4494-7	Perfume from Provence, by Fortescue. (Limited Edition.)	4 vols.
4498-9	Miracles of Faith, by Maillard. (Limited Edition.)	2 vols.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Biography:	Vols.
Chateaubriand, by André Maurois (trans. Vera Fraser) ..	6
Somerset Maugham, W. The Summing up ..	3
Rhys, Ernest. Everyman remembers ..	5
Foreign:	
Cameron, Duncan and Daiches, Salis. Hebrew Grammar for Beginners ..	3
Tacitus. Annals, Book II, ed. W. F. Mason and F. G. Plaistowe ..	2
Tacitus. Annals, Book III, text and notes (Loeb Classical Library) ..	1
History:	
Hannula, J. O. Finland's war of independence	3
Pickthorne, K. Early Tudor Government—Henry VIII ..	11
Law:	
Public Health Act, 1936 ..	4
Rose, Hubert A. Conveyancing Precedents under the Property Statutes of 1925, with explanatory notes and appendices. 1939 ed.	16
Political and Social Science:	
Guillebaud, C. W. The Social Policy of Nazi Germany ..	2
Psychology:	
MacMurray, John. The Boundaries of Science: a study in the philosophy of psychology ..	3

Theology:

Haddam, John. Good God: sketches in his character and activities	2
Manson, T. W. (ed.). Companion to the Bible	8
Storr, Vernon F. The world-wide Prayer: studies in the missionary aspects of the Lord's Prayer	1

Travel:

Clarke, Moma. Light and shade in France	1
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MANUSCRIPT MUSIC LIBRARY.

Piano and Orchestra:

Chopin—Second Concerto in F minor, Op. 21—	
Piano Solo (568)	
Orchestral Part (569)	

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

31st August, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	4
<i>(Two applications under consideration.)</i>	
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington	—
Wavertree House, Hove	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea	—
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring	2
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay	13
Home of Recovery, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth	15

HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield	3
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ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

Partially sighted or sighted girls wanted as Domestic and Kitchen Helps at Worcester College for the Blind. Apply in writing, enclosing references, to Secretary, Worcester College for the Blind, Worcester.

WANTED—SUPERVISOR, capable of instructing Trainees in (a) Basket-making Dept., Salary £4 10s. plus 5s. War Bonus weekly; and (b) Mat-making Dept. Salary £3 10s., plus 5s. War Bonus, weekly. All applications, stating age, qualifications, and experience, together with three recent testimonials, should reach the Secretary, Swansea and South Wales Institution for the Blind, 116, Eaton Crescent, Swansea, not later than 30th of September next.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1942.

Qualified Home Teacher, with many successes to his credit concerning past Examinations, continues to offer comprehensive postal tuition in Braille and Professional Knowledge; also helpful guidance respecting the service as a whole. Apply (enclosing stamp) to: H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

18th August, 1941.

WANTED: COPIES OF LETTERPRESS BOOKS ON BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION.

The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, offers the original price of 2s. 6d. each for clean copies of the letterpress editions of *Key to the Braille Music Notation*, 1922 (Catalogue No. 6673), and *Elementary Lessons and Exercises in the Revised (1922) Braille Music Notation*, by Watson (Catalogue No. 7351).

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind: Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age. Exceptions to this rule may be made during the war.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

ROYAL GLASGOW ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND. BASKET MAKER.

Wanted, man experienced in all branches of basket making and knowledge of buying. Good prospects. Application with full particulars, giving age and wages required, to be directed to the General Manager, Workshops for the Blind, 111, Saracen Street, Glasgow, N.

ORGANISER WANTED.

A vacancy has occurred at a branch office of the National Institute for the Blind for an Organiser (either sex). All duties money-raising. Previous experience helpful but not essential. Must be keen, energetic, and produce good references. Commencing salary £195 plus expenses. Car provided. Write fullest particulars to J. King Cummings, Secretary, National Institute for the Blind, 5 Whiteladies Road, Bristol, 8.

ABERDEEN TOWN AND COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR TEACHING THE BLIND AT THEIR HOMES.

Teacher or Home Visitor, preferably female and sighted, wanted for West Aberdeenshire and Banff. Applicants must hold the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind or undertake to pass necessary examination within two years of appointment. Good character essential. Apply, with references, stating salary expected, to J. D. MacDiarmid, Advocate, 173a, Union Street, Aberdeen.

ROYAL MIDLAND INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Appointment of Home Teacher.

Applications are invited from certificated, sighted Home Teachers for an appointment in the County of Nottingham, commencing salary £156 per annum, plus 6 per cent. War Bonus. Applications, stating age, qualifications, experience and enclosing copies of testimonials, should be sent to the undersigned on or before 27th September.

A. C. V. THOMAS,
Superintendent and Secretary.
30, Chaucer Street, Nottingham.

CITY OF SALFORD

BLIND PERSONS WELFARE COMMITTEE.

Home Teacher and Visitor of blind persons required (female). Salary scale £117 to £169 per annum (commencing salary if certificated £156 per annum) plus war bonus, at present ten per cent. Uniform clothing provided.

The person selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to her inclusion in the Superannuation Scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, experience and qualifications, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the Executive Officer, Blind Persons Welfare Department, 49, Crescent, Salford, 5, not later than Friday, 26th September, 1941.

H. H. TOMSON,
Town Clerk.

The New **BEACON**

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THE ADAPTABILITY OF BRAILLE METHODS TO INDUSTRY

By K. W. MASON.

IN my schooldays I had a very natural preference to be out in the open, indulging in sport of all kinds, and was always prepared to endure the most severe remonstrances for neglecting my studies if the opportunity of a game of cricket presented itself. This rather healthy desire persisted after I went to London University and it was not until a few months before I took my Degree that any change occurred. Then quite suddenly I realised that upon the result of this one examination I was to be graded for the rest of my life, and a quick glance at my copious notes made it quite clear that my cricket bat must be put on one side for the moment. I never regretted that decision nor the ensuing months of strain which produced their just reward, and although I subsequently enjoyed my sport just as much as I had done in the past I had found a new object in life—I had acquired the habit of work (believe me, it is only a habit) and now derived as much pleasure from my profession as anything else in life. I followed my chemical studies with a course in engineering and took up a post in a factory ideally situated in the middle of the English countryside, where after four years I had obtained the position of Assistant Manager. At this juncture fate stepped in and a chance accident led to my losing my sight for ever. How grateful I was then for those few months earlier in my life that had taught me the habit of work, for I saw that in this lay the only answer to my changed circumstances which would enable me to compensate for the faculty I had lost. After six weeks in hospital I was able to read Braille sufficiently well to enjoy the jokes in *Punch*, even though they were read laboriously, and I found myself anticipating the conclusion when my fingers had only reached the middle. When I was once more let loose in the world I had to come to a decision about my future activities, and I was strongly recommended on good authority to undertake the necessary training which would enable me to return to my old occupation. Subsequently this was proved to be very good counsel and I have never regretted following it, in preference to studying for some new profession.

The firm to which I belong are manufacturers of vulcanised fibre, a material which the majority of people merely associate with suit-cases, but which in fact is playing a large part in our war effort to-day. Its uses are manifold, from washers of all kinds for armament purposes to steel helmet linings, cap peaks and fibre helmets; from electrical insulations of all types to a wide range

of aircraft parts—details of which it would not be in the best interest to mention here. The material is made in sheets approximately 6 feet by 4 feet and in thicknesses varying from .01 inches to 1 inch. The time taken by the process varies from about a week for the thinner boards to nearly four months for the thickest board.

In the light of the knowledge that the factory produces at the moment an average of more than 7,000 sheets a week, and as they require individual treatment according to their thickness and the correct method of processing, it will be understood that accurate records are necessary in order to give the appropriate instructions to those responsible for the movement of the material. I had to bear in mind when making plans to accomplish this that any records that I might deem necessary to make in Braille must be in addition to the company's records as they would be quite useless in my absence—a position which would be quite impossible. The solution to this problem was Braille shorthand. I learnt this system in the form in which it was designed for the use of the stenographer although I did not need it for this purpose. As well as being admirably suited to the work for which it was intended it has the added advantage of being very adaptable.

When I returned to work seven months later I was able to devise a system of abbreviations for customers' names, job numbers, and the many technical terms of the trade, so that I prepared my own records of orders on hand in a few days, and since then it has only been about five minutes' work each day to keep them up to date. In this connection I found the Pyke-Glauser Braille Writer invaluable, as by using best quality Braille paper I could make a permanent loose-leaf system and could make the necessary alterations to my records as any particular job was put into process. A similar method on a much smaller scale is used to trace the material through the washing process, and the cards which are used to give the contents of each washing tank have appropriate niches cut in them to indicate the exact stage in the process which they have reached. This is so simple to keep up to date and works so satisfactorily that I find myself able to give a customer a reply in a few seconds should he make a telephone enquiry as to the position of his order. Also with this clear picture before me it is an easy matter to give the necessary instructions to charge-hands as to the correct movement of the material. It may be of interest to mention that I have found the small fasteners which were used to fasten the covering envelopes in which Braille publications were sent through the post

an asset in binding such a small card index system.

The business knowledge appertaining to the mill presents no difficulty nor does the direction of the laboratory work, although I am now no longer able to take an active part in this beyond the drafting of the final reports and deductions from these. All process records and production charts are raised for me so that I am able to follow clearly the progress of the mill, and a Braille shorthand machine is constantly in use on my desk for making notes of every description.

One of the main difficulties which I had to tackle was the rather poor facilities which are available to the blind for making mathematical calculations. In the past I had been in the habit of using a slide rule, and found it a very necessary part of my equipment; but now it seemed that I must resort to using cumbersome Braille logarithms for those calculations which were too involved to be worked out mentally. For some time I pondered about the possibility of getting a comptometer adapted so that it could be read by touch instead of vision. This type of machine is used a good deal by auditors and any sort of multiplication or division can be performed merely by turning a handle in the correct fashion, when the answer appears on a series of small wheels, rather like those of a cyclometer. Why could not these numerals be altered to Braille signs? Eventually I consulted the National Institute for the Blind on the matter and also the manufacturers of the machine, with the result that my instrument was produced in a few weeks. So far as I know, it is the only one of its type and it enables me to make the most lengthy calculations in a matter of a few seconds with unfailing accuracy, and you can be sure it is invaluable in permitting me to give a rapid estimate of the cost of any particular job or give a quick answer to any engineering problem. With its aid I am able to obtain my information and give the appropriate instructions as quickly as when I was able to use my slide rule. Thus another problem was solved.

I hope the foregoing may prove of assistance in indicating how the existing facilities for the blind can be adapted to meet one's own requirements. To the majority of blind people I think this is apparent, but the main difficulty is to convince sighted people that this is so. However, if the matter is tackled with self-confidence I think this is quite possible, as since my return to work 18 months ago I have been made mill manager—a position I coveted in my sighted days.

HOME NEWS

Southern Regional Home Teachers' Conference.—The Southern Regional Association's Conference for Home Teachers was held this year at two centres, the first taking place in London on September 17th, and a repetition being held in Birmingham on the 25th. This duplication was for the purpose of serving the whole area, and to ensure that wartime travelling complications should not prevent the attendance of any home teachers.

Both Conferences were highly successful, 66 per cent. of the home teachers of the Southern Regional Association attending. A report embodying the proceedings will be published as soon as possible, and it is hoped to give further details of the papers read in *THE NEW BEACON*.

Captain J. A. D. Cochrane-Barnett, Chairman of the Southern Regional Association, was in the Chair, and made it quite clear that this was the Home Teachers' day, that their views on the matters brought before them would be sought, and afterwards weighed and considered with a view, where desirable, to action by the Regional body.

The morning session was devoted to Present Day Problems of Home Teachers, and in the afternoon The Status of Home Teachers and the possibilities of improving Home Teaching were considered. The morning speaker was Mr. Acott, Home Teacher under the Kent Association, supported by Miss Gaster (Supervisor for the County of Warwick) and in the afternoon Mr. Edward Evans (Headmaster, East Anglian Schools for Blind and Deaf Children), followed by Mrs. Montagu Brown, a member of the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Health.

The Association provided luncheon and tea for its guests; a gesture which they greatly appreciated. The luncheon interval especially gave home teachers a welcome opportunity to become acquainted with colleagues from different parts of the country and to exchange views with one another on their work.

"V" Stamps to Aid the Blind of Greater London.—With the Postmaster-General's approval, a "V" Stamp Campaign has just been launched within the Greater London area. The "V" stamps are for use on the backs (only) of letters, parcels and packages and are priced at 1d. each.

They carry the two-fold message of faith in Victory and work on behalf of Greater London's

Blind. The design is dominated by a large V in red, with a white and blue background, and overprinted "Help London's 13,531 sightless to victory over blindness." The stamps are available in sheets of 120, price 10s., or in any lesser quantities. Applications for 5s. or less should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

The campaign is being widely advertised, and already 22 of London's leading stores have been kind enough to give permission to hold a week's sale at each store, in which to sell these stamps. The mark aimed at by this appeal is to raise £10,000 for the Greater London Fund, which means the sale of two million, four hundred thousand stamps. It is hoped that many will use these stamps on their Christmas greetings as a thanksgiving for sight.

The Blind Man's Perfect Host.—A blind man recently spent a short holiday with a doctor friend in Bristol, a visit made all the more enjoyable by his host's kind thought beforehand.

He sent his intending visitor a most ingeniously contrived plan of the ground floor of the house, worked out by means of cardboard for walls, cotton threads for windows, matches for steps and corrugated paper for stairs, with furniture, etc., indicated by pieces of thin felt cut to correct shape and scale.

He also prepared a plan on similar lines of the layout of the roads in the neighbourhood, with the result that his blind guest was familiar with the house and district right from the start of his visit.

Hetherington Charities.—In a new scheme framed for the administration of the Hetherington Charities for Aged Blind Persons, under the administration of the Governing Body of Christ's Hospital, it is proposed to substitute the words "an income exceeding £65 a year in the case of single persons or widows or widowers or a joint income exceeding £91 a year in the case of married persons" for the words "an income exceeding £42 a year." All blind persons are now entitled to receive 19s. 6d. a week—(or more) from their Local Authority—hence the change. At present there are 650 blind pensioners, and they receive in all nearly £10,000 a year.

Belfast Home for the Blind Transferred.—The Home for the Blind, Cliftonville Road, Belfast, has been transferred to Dunloskin, Carrickfergus. A committee, under the presidency of Mr. Robert Clyde, J.P., has been appointed to

negotiate for the purchase of Dunloskin, with its lawns and gardens comprising 21 acres.

The Output of Blind Mop-Makers—British and American.—In our July issue we published a note taken from a newspaper to the effect that seven blind men of New Orleans, working at the rate of 75 dozen mops a day, had shipped a final consignment of 7,500 of 22,500 mops for the Army to the Quartermaster Depot at Atlanta 11 days ahead of schedule. We have now received an interesting letter from the workshop in question (The Lighthouse for the Blind of New Orleans) stating that our information was not entirely correct. Seven men, combined, completed 75 dozen mop heads ready for ship-

ment in a 10-hour day, two men cutting yarn, two men sewing by machine, two men trimming, bunching and wrapping, and one man acting as general helper. The mops were made in accordance with Government specifications.

The note attracted the attention of the Halifax Society for the Blind, and the Organising Secretary informs us that totally blind men employed by the Society make 60 dozen "do-all" pattern floor mops each in a day of eight and a half hours, and are considered the fastest workers in the North of England.

The two organisations have been put into touch with one another, and it is hoped that they may be able to exchange information that will be mutually helpful.

PERSONALIA

The following are new members of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind which was re-appointed on 31st July, 1941:—

Group A.—LT. THE HON. L. W. JOYNSON-HICKS, R.N.V.R. (in place of SIR STUART M. FRASER), elected by the Southern Regional Association. MR. W. J. WILLIAMS (in place of MR. BRINLEY WILLIAMS), elected by the Wales and Monmouthshire Regional Council.

Group B.—COUNCILLOR V. W. GROSVENOR (in place of the late ALDERMAN C. LUCAS), elected by the Association of Municipal Corporations.

Group C.—LT.-COLONEL THE LORD TEVIOT, D.S.O., M.C. (in place of the late MR. EDMUND TOFT), elected by St. Dunstan's.

Group D.—MR. H. H. COLDWELL (in place of MR. H. S. ROYSTON), elected by the National Association of Blind Workers. MR. H. SAVAGE (in place of MR. A. MCALPINE), elected by the National League of the Blind.

* * *

MR. PETER FAIRHURST, Sales Manager and Exhibition Organiser of the Home Industries Department of the National Institute for the Blind, has been appointed to succeed MR. CHARLES CASHMAN, who is retiring on age limit, as Secretary* of the South-Eastern Branch (104, Queen's Road, Brighton, 1) of the National Institute.

* * *

The REV. A. WELLESLEY ORR, M.A., Vicar of St. Paul's, Kingston Hill, Editor of *The Moon Messenger*, the religious magazine published by the National Institute in Moon type, has been awarded the M.B.E. for his help and encourage-

ment to Civil Defence during enemy air attacks. He has been instrumental in saving many lives and has done much to alleviate the sufferings of air-raid victims.

* * *

MR. GODFREY ROBINSON, director of the firm of Messrs. T. Robinson, Sons & Company, egg importers, Hull, is to be the Sheriff of Hull for the coming municipal year. Mr. Robinson lost the sight of both eyes in the last war, and is a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind.

* * *

MR. GERARD J. I. MILLER, the blind solicitor of Preston, has been married to his secretary, Miss Mary Eileen Lee.

* * *

MR. R. W. BOWEN, M.P., who is blind, presided at the Sixth Biennial Meeting of the South African National Council for the Blind at Bloemfontein, when it was resolved to transfer the headquarters from Cape Town to Pretoria for the next two years.

* * *

CAPTAIN E. NICKSON, J.P., M.C., has been appointed Secretary of the Liverpool Workshops for the Blind, in place of MR. J. H. MINES, who is retiring after 17 years' service.

* * *

MR. FRED ROTHWELL has been appointed Headmaster at the Homes for the Blind, Fulwood, near Preston, in succession to Mr. D. S. THOMAS, who resigned his post at the end of August. Mr. Rothwell has for a number of years been Assistant Master at the Royal Blind School, Sheffield.

WHENCE THE GOLDEN EGG?

By LAURANCE R. WATSON

THE Editor of THE NEW BEACON, perhaps letting benevolence outrun wisdom, has suggested to me as the basis for an article this enquiry: does a blind person prefer assistance from voluntary organizations or assistance from the State?

What will eventually be apparent to anyone reading these remarks may as well be confessed at the start. I just don't know. Of course I have my own views, but am unaware to what extent they square with those of the majority of blind people, or indeed if there be a majority view at all.

Probably most of us regret, to a greater or less degree, that the question arises. We should doubtless prefer to feel that for adults at least assistance from any outside source was unnecessary; that blind people were able to support themselves, if needing support, by their own efforts. But despite much vigorous writing on the subject this state of things remains an ideal and a dream—an ideal and a dream whose realization and substantiation will demand much clear and accurate thinking, much forthright and eloquent speaking, much tireless and arduous striving. If not an actual prejudice, at least a deep-rooted misconception has to be dispelled: the belief that a blind person is incapable of taking part usefully and economically in the world's work. And when this popular misconception has been dispelled the great task will yet remain of demonstrating that it was indeed a misconception. This task can be performed, this demonstration furnished in the last resort only by blind people themselves.

No fair-minded person can deny that the enthusiast who clamours, and rightly clamours, for the employment of blind workers ignores many difficulties which have to be overcome. For instance, although managements and authorities are constantly attacked for not employing blind people, it is rarely if ever pointed out that their employment must almost inevitably impose a certain amount of added responsibility on their seeing colleagues. If X is blind and Y and Z are not, Y and Z will in all probability feel impelled to help X (both in and out of office hours) in a manner and to an extent which they would never be called upon to help each other. Simply because of his

disability, and with no intention of doing so, X would rely on a kind of moral blackmail to get necessary assistance. Few sighted people can be so convinced of blind folks' independence as, say, to let them fall downstairs; few blind people would really appreciate such conviction.

Since many years must roll and much water flow and, we trust, a few dictatorships collapse before the blind community can hope to dispense with outside help, our problem still confronts us: whence is that help more welcome? Confining our enquiry for now to financial assistance, the mammon of this world prompts to us make answer: quantity is all; money talks. If the State can afford most, then let the State provide; if voluntary organizations are able to outdo the State in munificence then let us to them leave the provision. It must be left to the experts in such matters to determine from which source the blind are likely to receive most benefit, always bearing in mind that in fact financial help is only part (though a substantial part) of the assistance they require.

For the sake of argument let it be given (in the Euclidian, not the donative sense) that a blind man could receive a sovereign from the State or a sovereign from some voluntary society. Then which sovereign would he prefer? State assistance to the individual is apt to be granted (or withheld, for that matter), with a passive disinterest, preceded by a sort of impersonal but penetrating inquisitiveness. A measure, framed in a spirit of benevolence and introduced and debated with eloquent sympathy for and understanding of the lot of those for whose advantage it was designed, is liable, when being administered, to mislay its bloom of goodwill and to take on rather the patina of a transaction in which one party is endeavouring, coldly and determinedly, to frustrate the long-experienced and constantly-expected intrigues of the other to obtain more than his due. Because of his particular handicap the blind man may be more sensitive than others to this attitude which, possibly unavoidable, is in any case the result rather of traditional technique than of official malignity. But this very impersonality in giving relieves the recipient of any uncomfortable sense of obligation, except in so far as such a sense is one of the strands in the pattern of patriotism. Those who receive from the State are, after all, part of the State and to some extent are but receiving what their

fellow-citizens are prepared to give. Social legislation translates into practice, though often belatedly, the promptings of the public conscience. In taking his sovereign from the Exchequer the recipient may be spared any feeling of outsideness.

The advantage to the blind man of getting his sovereign from some voluntary organization is largely a question of the intimate aspect of social service. Those who administer the funds for distribution, having fewer people to deal with, may hand out the pound note with an exhilarating or affable word which makes the recipient feel that not only is he being furnished with cash but is, for the moment at least, of real interest to someone—no small benefit to such as are for the most part alone and restricted in their outside contacts. The donors may scrupulously act on the maxim which declares that to give graciously is to give twice. They may go further and, if so requested, advise the recipient in matters connected with the spending of his money or (perhaps more helpfully) in matters connected with the avoidance of expenditure; exhibiting a sincere but tactful interest in his affairs. For the purposes of this discussion it has been postulated that we are concerned only with financial aid, and that the amounts available from either source are the same. But giving in this spirit does enhance the gift; rather as if the money should be enclosed in a packet of cigarettes or a box of chocolates. Such immaterial supplementary grants can scarcely come from the State.

Nor, of course, do they by any means always flow from the coffers of voluntary organizations. This personal contact business is as broad as long—and frequently even broader. Those entrusted with the disposal of voluntarily subscribed funds on occasion behave as though the money to be distributed were part of their personal income. Their dealings with the recipients are conducted with a clattering brightness ("Miss A is so charming and so efficient and gets on with the blind so well"), or with a fussy condescension suggestive of the more anaemic members of a decadent squirearchy dispensing largesse to the local villagers in a high wind ("Old Mr. B! Such a darling. The blind simply love him!"). Blind people might reasonably prefer the cold detachment of the State to such personal contacts.

I have resisted the temptation to touch upon the thorny subject of Government pensions for all blind people since it is not altogether relevant to the matter in hand and is, in any event, a subject for the expert. But it is a question on which much remains to be said,

for it is certainly not irrelevant to the well-being and comfort of a large number of the blind.

The immediate consideration remains: if a blind man or woman can achieve a golden egg, which goose shall lay it?

CORRESPONDENCE

Wanted—A Post-War Scheme.

To the Editor.

SIR,—At the recent Home Teachers' Conference we discovered some astonishing diversities of conditions. Those present will remember (1) Army Pensions assessments, (2) petrol allowances, (3) conditions under which Home Visitors attended the Conference, (4) salary scales, etc.

From the flattering atmosphere of this Conference we returned to our widely differing jobs, conscious that irrespective of our opinions our individual Authorities would still have complete control of our conditions.

The Directory of Agencies for the Blind is a formidable list of a host of bodies, all working individually for blind welfare, yet the Home Visitor is fortunate if she knows anything much about a dozen of them, although her problems are similar throughout the country.

Many of these apparently overlapping Agencies regard each other very aloofly, and therein lies their inability to remove these differences. Some of them have been established for years, yet we still have commencing salaries ranging from £117 (see September NEW BEACON advertisement) to £200.

Further, surely a soldier is of equal value to his parents wherever he lives; yet some counties assess the whole of his allowance, others take part, while others generously ignore the whole amount.

Is there no one powerful enough to put forward a tangible post-war scheme to scrap overlapping of effort and expense, and to form a CENTRAL BODY—why not a Ministry of Blind Welfare?—a giant Body commanding the wholesome respect of every county.

At the moment Local Authorities can blandly ignore all but their own opinions; Agencies bicker between themselves; and the blind and their Home Visitors flounder between wishful thinking and cold facts.

Yours, etc.,
A. F. K.

TEACHERS OF THE BLIND: THEIR STATUS AND SALARIES

A SURVEY bearing the above title has recently been published by the American Foundation for the Blind, from which it can be purchased for one dollar. It was carried out by Dr. Berthold Lowenfeld on behalf of the Foundation, and was undertaken at the request of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and the American Association of Workers for the Blind.

The study covers 88 per cent. of all residential schools for the blind throughout the States, only 12 per cent. having been unwilling to take part. It can therefore be taken as presenting a comprehensive picture of the position.

It falls into three main sections, as follows:—

1. The personal and professional status of teachers.
2. Their salaries.
3. Their salaries as contrasted with those paid to teachers in "public schools," i.e., schools, whether elementary or secondary, corresponding generally to our rate-aided schools.

In every section statistical tables are given, over thirty of these being included in all, but in order that the general reader may, without detailed study of individual tables, gain an idea of the trend of the Report, each part of the first main section is followed by a summary, and at the end of the three sections a Summary of Facts is given, "in an effort to give a brief composite picture of the teacher of the blind and his status."

Obviously, it is not possible to make any exact comparison between the position of the teacher of the blind in the United States and the position of such a teacher over here, as conditions vary widely. But, without attempting to press such a comparison, the following facts, taken from the Survey, may be of interest:—

1. *Personal status of teachers.*—Of the 703 teachers (74 per cent. of all teachers of the blind in the States) the following facts are given:—

- (a) 491, or 70 per cent., are women; 212, or 30 per cent. are men. Of the elementary teachers, 90 per cent. are women, and of the vocational teachers 49 per cent.
- (b) 210, or 30 per cent., of the teachers are married; 493, or 70 per cent., are single.
- (c) The average age of the teachers is 38.
- (d) 199, or 28 per cent., of the teachers are blind, and it is explained that all visually

handicapped teachers are included under this term. It may be of interest here to note that in January, 1932, when the Joint Committee of the College of Teachers and the National Institute for the Blind carried on its investigations, there were in our own schools 91 blind teachers out of a total of 548, or rather less than 17 per cent.; there were, however, in addition 57 described as "partially blind," so that probably the discrepancy between the figures is less than appears at first.

The American Survey states that there is one visually handicapped teacher to every 3/4 teachers on the whole staff of the average residential school; the proportion in elementary schools is one out of four, in high schools almost one out of six, among music teachers one out of three, and among vocational instructors almost one out of two.

- (e) 656 teachers are full-time, and 47 part-time, and of the former group 400, or 61 per cent., are resident.

Professional status of teachers.—More than one-third of the whole number are employed in elementary schools.

- (a) *Training.*—This is stated to compare favourably with that of public school teachers, both on the elementary and the high school level, elementary teachers in schools for the blind having had an average of 3½ years' preparation, and high school teachers 4½ years. The enquiry has shown that while in the South-East, Middle States and the South-West, the elementary teachers of the blind have generally had less professional training than the public school teachers, in other regions their training is either as good as, or better than, that of the public school teacher. 21 per cent. of the classroom teachers have taken special courses in the education of the blind. Presumably this is a course on the same lines as that required by the Board of Education in this country, but apparently it is not compulsory in the United States.

- (b) *Experience.*—Teachers in schools for the blind have an average of 12.2 years of experience, men elementary teachers falling below this average to 7.3 years, and women in high schools rising above it to 14.7 years.

It is interesting to note that 64 per cent. of the sighted classroom teachers in schools for the blind have had previous experience in the teaching of sighted children.

(c) *Hours of work and numbers in class.*—An average of nearly 7 hours per school day is required. The average number of pupils per teacher in schools with over 150 pupils is something over 7, and in schools with fewer than this number, about 6 pupils.

(d) *Refresher courses.*—About 54 per cent. of the classroom teachers report that they keep up to date by attendance at summer schools or extension courses, or by studying for further degrees.

2. *Salaries.*—A good many pages of the Survey are devoted to this question, but as it is one which cannot be usefully contrasted with anything in this country, it is not necessary to do more than give the conclusion reached by the evidence of the statistical tables; which is, that salaries in schools for the blind in the United States are, in general, considerably lower than those paid in their public schools. The result seems, in the opinion of the writers of the Survey, to prove that "the difference between salaries of public school teachers and teachers of the blind

is responsible for the shorter length of service of teachers in schools for the blind . . . Only by an approximation of salaries in schools for the blind to those in public schools will our profession induce well-prepared teachers to stay long enough to make them also professionally experienced."

The fact that in the Far West, in New England, and in the Middle Atlantic States the teacher of the blind may receive from £66 to £130 per annum less than a teacher in a public school can, as the Survey temperately says, "hardly make for a stable personnel or attract teachers of long experience."

Such a survey as this must help the cause of the teachers, and they owe a debt of gratitude to the Foundation for undertaking it. "Teaching should," in the words of a Bulletin on Salaries of School Employees, issued by the National Education Association, and quoted at the beginning of the Survey, "pay enough to attract young persons of the highest personal and professional qualifications; to hold in teaching those who continue to improve themselves through experience, travel and further study . . . to provide savings whereby those incapacitated by age or disability, may retire in decency."

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Robert Newson, at Middlesbrough, aged 67, well known for his social and religious activities on Teeside and in Cleveland. For eight years he was Secretary-Superintendent of the Cleveland and South Durham Institute for the Blind, Middlesbrough, with which he had previous association as Hon. Secretary.

Joshua Cawood, of Burythorpe, nr. Malton, Yorks, aged 68. Mr. Cawood was educated at the old Leeds School for the Blind in Albion Street and at the Royal Normal College. On his return to Leeds he was appointed Instructor in Piano-Tuning at the (then) new School for the Blind in Blenheim Walk—a position which he held until it was thought advisable to close the department. His interest in the welfare of the blind was well known in and around Leeds and at Burythorpe. In 1926 he founded the Yorkshire Blind Workers' Association—a society which functions in Leeds and the area around Malton. Apart from piano-tuning he was keenly interested and successful in pig-keeping.

In accordance with his own wishes, four of his ex-pupils—"his lads"—carried his remains to their last resting place.

John Booth, of Preston, aged 85. He was the senior member of the Committee of the Homes for the Blind, Fulwood, and during his long association with this institution he held the offices of Treasurer and Chairman and was a Co-Trustee of the Homes.

Mr. Booth was Chairman of Directors of E. H. Booth & Co., Ltd., the Preston grocery firm. He was interested in many branches of social work, including work for deaf and dumb children and for boy scouts. He was a generous benefactor to churches of all denominations including the Salvation Army.

His son, Mr. John Kenyon Booth, J.P., like his father, has held the office of Treasurer of the Fulwood Homes for the Blind for a considerable period, and the Homes and the blind generally are greatly indebted to the interest and assistance given by the Booth family.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Blind Man's House.

The Blind Man's House, by Hugh Walpole (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 8s. 6d.) is that distinguished novelist's last work, and even for that reason alone would claim our special interest.

The setting is a Cornish village, and the story opens when Julius Cromwell, the blind man of the title, comes back to live there after years of absence, bringing with him his second wife, Celia, a woman fifteen years younger than he. He was blinded in the last war, and in the years that separate the nineteen forties from 1918 he has gradually retreated more and more into a satisfying inner life of his own. Inevitably cut off by his blindness from the normal activities of a strong athletic man, he has come to rely on that life of the mind which he feels no need to share even with the young wife who loves him and whose love he returns. He is not a great reader—"Braille is somehow for me not amusing. The writer in Braille has to be so damned swell"—but he is a thoughtful man who finds mental satisfaction in keeping a journal of his inner life and in listening to records of classical music. He indulges only sparingly in self-pity, and without conscious effort wins and holds the affection of those who come into contact with him; of the gentle pious housekeeper, Lizzie Gayner, who "loved him as though she were his defender, his protector," but never let her love become obtrusive; of his rather irresponsible secretary, Jim Burke; of Simon, the seven-year-old son of the local parson; and above all of Celia, his wife.

But almost from the first his relations with Celia were ill-fated. "I think," writes shrewd Lizzie Gayner in a letter to her sister, "she is frightened of his blindness, thinking she's to have all the more power with him because he was blind, and now finding that he seems to get away from her where she can't get after him." It is a sound summing-up of the situation.

Celia came to him with a love that had something maternal in it, but also something fiercely possessive, a longing to serve him and to make him dependent upon her, and the fact that he elected to withdraw into a world of his own, where he did not need her as guide or support, led her to resent his blindness; it served as a barrier between them rather than as a link, so that she grew to hate it. "Blindness leads you into strange places," Julius says to his friend

Lamplough, "It makes the outside physical world shadowy. . . . I sit too much by myself, listen to music too much, want to get finished with meals and walks and people so that I can sit back and let my mind go and penetrate through. . . ." And into this remote world Celia could not follow him. "She's been brought up anyhow," Julius goes on rather priggishly, "No religion, no codes. There's no reason for her why she shouldn't do anything at all she wants to. Any kind of spiritual world seems to her nonsense. She's got the creed of her post-war generation that there is no creed." When Julius talks like that, it is difficult for the reader not to feel impatient with him, though Celia must have been a trying wife, with her sudden outbursts of temper and her possessiveness; and surely she was sometimes unnaturally heartless. Would any woman who loved a blind man ever deliberately tease him by hiding from him in a room, or, in her jealousy of his enjoyment of music, cut off the gramophone record to which he was listening, happy and absorbed?

Except for his gradual withdrawal from the world of sense, the writer makes Julius normal, and does not fall into the clumsy errors of less experienced writers by giving him a mysterious sixth sense. His hearing and touch are quickened but not phenomenal. The story is only concerned with the possible effect of blindness in separating a man from the everyday life around him. And at last, when tragedy threatens, and Julius almost loses Celia for ever, he sees that this deliberate choice of a life isolated from his fellows must end in disaster, and realises that interdependence and tolerance are all-important. The book ends with an extract from William Morris's *Dream of John Ball* which Julius copies into his Journal as expressing the truth that experience has taught him: "Fellowship is heaven and lack of fellowship is hell; fellowship is life and lack of fellowship is death. . . . I bid you not dwell in hell but in heaven, or while ye must, upon earth, which is part of heaven, and forsooth no foul part."

Although the blind man's house is the main theme of the story, the fate of Julius and Celia is interwoven with that of a number of other characters. There are the Brennans at the Rectory, including the handsome and lazy incumbent, his beautiful and tiresome wife, and

their three children, all much nicer and more full of character than their commonplace parents. There is Lizzie Gayner, loving her tiresome and unloveable son, and Jim Burke, Julius's secretary, who loves both Julius and Celia, and nearly wrecks both their lives.

Walpole was too skilled a craftsman to write a novel that would fail to hold the reader's

attention, but it is doubtful if the present story will add to his reputation. In the last few years a number of writers have chosen blindness as their theme, but we still await one whose novel stands out as remarkable; perhaps blindness is an experience so personal that it cannot be made convincing by the writer who views it from without.

MOON WRITING APPLIANCE

PERHAPS one of the greatest advantages of Braille over Moon is the fact that Braille can be written as well as read.

The newly devised Moon Writing Appliance, just put on the market by the National Institute, is designed to overcome this deficiency in Moon, and to enable the user to correspond with his friends. The cost of the appliance is £1 10s. od., but it can be obtained by individual blind persons for £1. Rolls of gummed paper cost 9d. or 6d., and ungummed rolls 6d. and 4d.

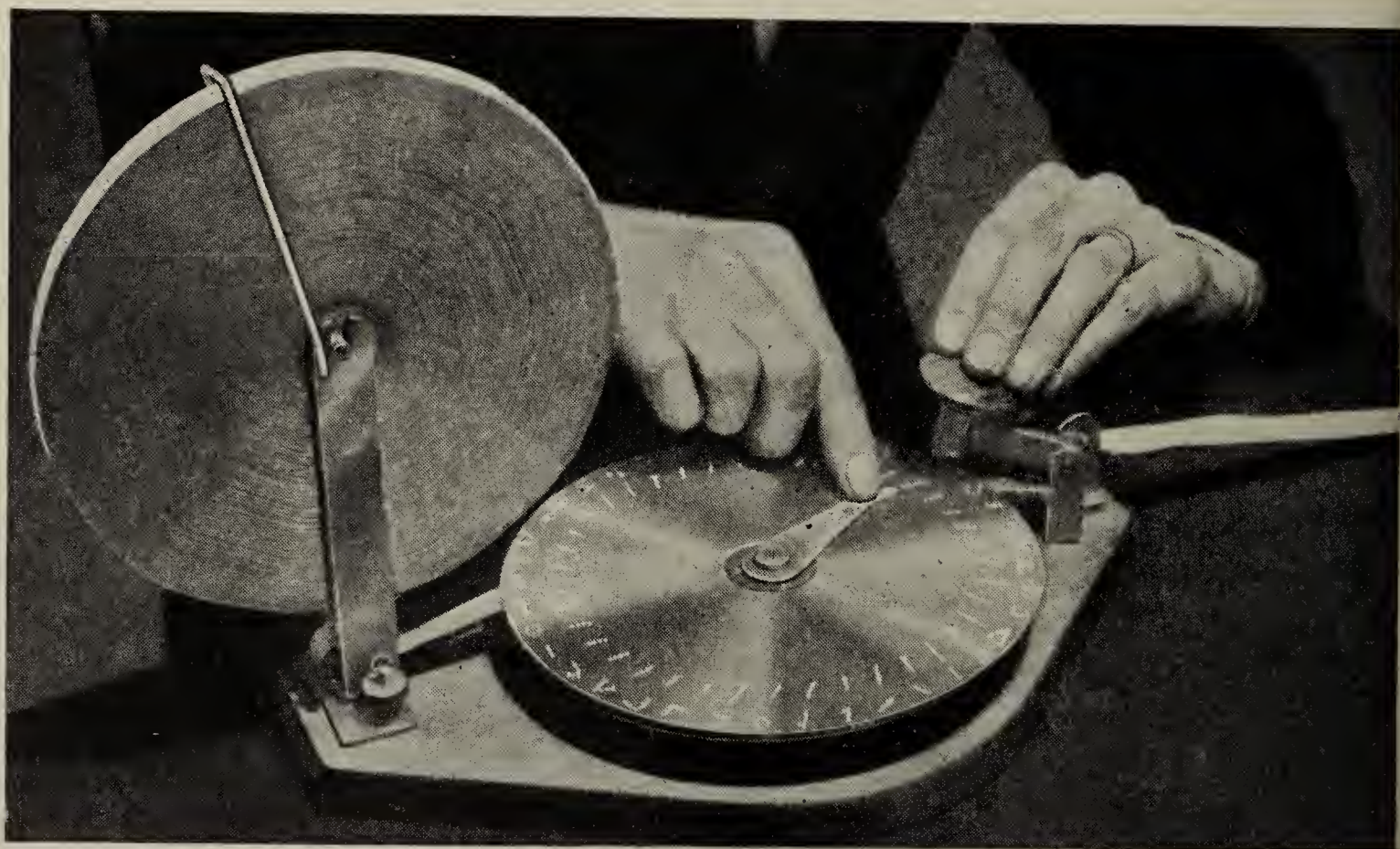
The rolls, which are half-an-inch wide, contain 800 feet of paper. On the assumption that the average word contains five letters, four words will occupy about one foot; it will therefore be seen that approximately 3,200 words can be written on the roll.

The apparatus consists of a wooden base-board on which are mounted:—

1. Twin metal rotatable discs, embossed around

their outer edges with Moon characters; adjacent to each character a series of dots is embossed. When the dots opposite the character to be embossed are in line with the dots on the fixed indicator, the correct positioning of the character over the paper tape is ensured.

2. A detachable paper roll carrier; this when in position is at right-angles to the base-board and is on the right-hand side of the twin discs.
3. A combined hand-operated paper feeding mechanism and knob for embossing; this unit is on the left of the twin discs. The paper from the roll passes between the twin discs and the two rollers of the feeding mechanism, and it is advanced by rotating the wheel controlling the two rollers after each depression of the knob.



THE WAR'S EFFECT ON THE PROVISION OF APPARATUS

DIFFICULTY in providing apparatus for the blind, and delay in effecting repairs, are giving serious concern to the National Institute for the Blind. Controllers of sundry indispensable materials have recently made generous concessions to the need of the blind and have granted the licences which should remove some of the difficulties. But the real bottleneck lies in the realm, not of materials, but of labour, and there things are likely to get worse rather than better. Every day craftsmen are called up to serve in the Forces or in the making of munitions. A manufacturer who has an order on hand for apparatus for the blind cannot turn his labour on to that job unless it can be spared from Government orders. The Institute itself cannot employ skilled engineers whose labour is urgently wanted elsewhere.

To us in the blind community all this is very annoying, but if anyone should grumble it could only be because of doubt whether everything possible was being done to overcome the difficulties. We can say, with perfect confidence, that there can be no reasonable cause for criticism on that score. The officers of the Institute, and manufacturers alike, are doing their best and getting, on the whole, very satisfactory results. Taken by and large, the blind, in matters peculiarly relating to themselves, are doing very well in comparison with other sections of the population. They would be the last to complain. As Mr. Eagar wrote in the paper, "The British Blind in War-time," which elicited a warm tribute of admiration from the Convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind at Indianapolis in July, "We are proud of the way in which the blind of Great Britain have behaved in the hour of freedom's greatest struggle, and have found in the time of testing qualities of greatness."

A partial solution to the apparatus problem is to husband our resources. We must mobilise appliances for the blind to the utmost extent, and no categories—neither the old-fashioned nor the aged and infirm appliances—must escape mobilisation. There must be serviceable machines laid by in many a household because their days of usefulness were thought to have ended. There must be serviceable parts in many an old machine long since discarded because of partial decay.

In other ways, too, the effects of shortage can be minimised. Some appliances are suitable for communal use; some can be lent for special purposes or exchanged. Every piece of apparatus should be treated with the greatest care; it should be cleaned and oiled and guarded from the damp. Its component parts should be studied so that none of them is subjected to strain or otherwise misused. In brief, each appliance must be inspired, by cajolery and kindness, to weather the wastage of war.

If such ways are adopted, and given a perfect understanding between supplier and customer, we see no reason to expect a famine of appliances. In the provision of apparatus for the blind there must, in these days, be defects and delays, but they are an effect not of carelessness or inconsiderateness on the part of supplier or customer but of totalitarian war.

MARGINAL

With a sigh, echoed, we hope, by all our readers, we relinquish in this issue our beloved margins. The fiat of the paper controller has gone forth, and rather than deprive readers of reading-matter we have chosen to dispense partially with the grace of its setting. We have always been proud of our margins; they were generous and pleasing to the eye.

It may seem unkind to hope that our readers share our marginal sorrow. But we pay them the compliment of believing that they appreciate clear type and clear setting. One of our main interests is the prevention of blindness, and there is nothing so bad for the sight of readers as smudgy type and confused setting. The subject is, indeed, of too great importance to be treated merely in marginalia. We have seen reports and documents issued by bodies concerned in blind welfare of which the main intent, judging by appearances, is to increase the number of the blind.

We can spare a tear, even in war time, for our vanished margins if we thereby pledge ourselves to guard the precision, in the interests of sight, of our humblest colons and commas.

THE EDITOR.

THE BLIND CHILD AND THE FAMILY

[By ELIZABETH W. WHITEHEAD.]

(Concluded from last month's issue.)

IN an article, "Champion of the Blind," published in "St. Francis' Home Journal" and reprinted in "The Catholic Digest" the writer describes an interview with Miss Hazel Hurst, an American woman who has been blind from birth and who has now devoted herself to work for the blind. Miss Hurst explained that she had "a mother who understood child psychology without ever having studied it"; there was no pampering and she was brought up exactly like her sisters. "I was six before I knew I was sightless," she says, "and mother's way of telling me was unique. First, she told me that everyone in the family had some sort of handicap. For instance, one had a terrible temper, another stuttered, and she enumerated a long list of faults. Then she told me of mine. I was so busy being sorry for the others that I wasn't a bit sorry for myself. In fact, I felt I had the edge on them. I remember asking mother 'Don't they have ten eyes like I do?' for of course I thought everyone else 'saw with their fingers' like myself." Whence came, we may ask, this mother's understanding of child psychology? Sound psychology is based on sound philosophy; Mrs. Hurst's psychology was good, not because it adhered strictly to a lot of complicated rules, but because it was based on Christian philosophy, because it represented the Christian view of life in action.

We have to ask ourselves whether it is enough to give to the parents of the blind a series of excellent recommendations well and simply expressed or whether it is necessary to help them to find a philosophy of life which will give some account of this strange and terrible thing that has happened to their child. I am convinced that a great deal of time is wasted through the failure to realise that the fundamental problem of blindness is spiritual rather than material. If this aspect of the situation is faced first there will still be material problems to solve, but they will be solved more easily and quickly. We cannot force a belief upon anyone, but we can suggest a solution to the problem. We have to face the fact that, though it will be modified by natural affection, a parent's attitude towards his blind child will be the outcome of his beliefs or lack of beliefs on the fundamental problems of life.

Precisely how great a handicap is blindness?

How can we answer that question unless we first answer the question to what end was man created? One parent believes that his child's chief purpose in life is to get a good job with a large salary attached. Blindness is therefore a very great handicap, for the proportion of such rewards allotted to the blind is scanty indeed. The training of his blind baby may, then, very well be left to take care of itself; he must concentrate on his other children. Another parent believes that his child's chief end is happiness, fulfilment. In spite of the testimony of wise men throughout the ages that there is nothing so elusive as happiness when pursued for its own sake, he cherishes this belief; his child is deprived of one great source of happiness, the sense of sight; he will try to compensate for this deprivation by doing everything he possibly can for the poor child, by giving him everything he cries for. Once more man, thinking to have sown joy, reaps only sorrow. To yet another parent physical evil is as repellent as moral evil is to other men; he is ashamed of his blind child; if the child is totally blind he keeps him in the background, if partially he tries to conceal the fact that there is nothing wrong. To the parent who believes that man is merely a highly developed animal and nothing more, blindness is indeed a catastrophe. It would have been better, they feel, if their child had not been born. They may perhaps derive consolation from the idea that science will in time eliminate blindness, although precisely how this is to be accomplished is never explained; and their faith in science which, although admittedly it can do much excellent work to prevent blindness, is occupied in inventing ever more deadly weapons to destroy, among other things, the eyes of men, seems scarcely justified. This parent can, however, get the unfortunate child in an institution where he will be fed and housed and taught, perhaps even given work to do, at all events he will have an allowance from the local authority if the parent cannot afford to keep him, and there are homes where he may reside when his training is completed. The parent therefore considers his blind child to be purely the concern of the local committee and the school authorities. But this type of parent may be endowed with a larger fund of natural affection; he then thinks it quite enough if his child can perform a few

circus tricks ; even the worst of its bad habits are applauded with delight. The parent is fond of his child, but sees no particular reason why it should be educated.

If we return to St. Ignatius we find that he said, "Man was created to praise, reverence, and serve God, and by this means to save his soul." This is the view which inspired the founding of one of the greatest educational organisations in the world ; this is the philosophy on which was built Mrs. Hurst's psychology. If this be true, then blindness is not so great a handicap after all. The blind child will have to be trained, disciplined, educated just like his seeing fellows ; the end will be precisely the same, only the means will differ. He will be given an education in accordance with his capacities because to "praise, reverence, and serve God" he must first know God. To this end he will study the works of creation that he may increase his knowledge of the Creator ; he will learn to distinguish between truth and falsehood, for God is truth. He will be taught independence and self-reliance because one cannot serve others until one has learnt to help oneself and the service of God includes the service of one's fellows ; he will accept the services of others when necessary without self-consciousness or self-reproach because he knows that all men are alike dependent upon God and their fellows ; only the manner of their dependence differs. He will therefore not become a burden to his brothers and sisters or his seeing friends, but since service, not self-seeking is the rule for all they will naturally help him so that he may take his place among them and join in the normal family life. He will aim at normality of behaviour not because it is an end in itself, but because it is a means to an end ; his end is the same as that of other men, the means to it differ slightly in his case, but they do not differ from essentials. If possible he will be trained for some particular work, and it will be impossible for anyone to view with complacency the unemployment of those who are capable of work. This, then, is the view best calculated to help the blind child, his parents, and his teachers. The touchstone of a belief is not its usefulness but its truth, yet the realisation of the practical value of the Christian view may perhaps lead some who have hitherto rejected or ignored it to reconsider their attitude. According to this view all children come into the world with some defect ; some suffer from spiritual imperfections alone, whereas others suffer also from physical handicaps ; both alike have to be overcome, and it is precisely by this life-long struggle that man is perfected. We have, however, to acknowledge that much of what has

been written about blindness in recent times has been in sharp contrast to this view. To-day we are badly in need of a little clear thinking in the light of which to revise our position.

We are still by profession a Christian nation ; surely then we may find a basis for co-operation between family and institution in the Christian philosophy. On this basis we may build up a scheme whereby the institution gives to the parents help and advice in the training of their child, and asks them, in return, to send a representative to its committee. The institution will try to base itself on the model of the family and to acquire the spirit of the family. This principle has been recognised by the National Institute which calls its institutions for blind babies "homes." Unless every institution for the blind is a "home" in the strict sense, the blind child will be immeasurably impoverished. So far as possible the pupil will be kept in touch with his family throughout his school-days, and every effort will be made to help him, if circumstances permit, to return to and take his place in the family when his training has been completed. This is admittedly not an easy task, but the Christian ideal commits us to hard tasks. By making the attempt we shall be playing our part in the establishment of the "new order" which we are opposing to the "new order" of another philosophy so repellent to us that we are making tremendous sacrifices to overthrow it. We are therefore bound to make this effort unless we want to be beaten, not by force of arms, but by a pagan philosophy which sets at naught the family, the home, the Christian faith itself.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Deaf-Blind Radio Operator.—Leo Sadowsky 21, a blind mute, is now an amateur radio operator. He passed the Federal Communications Commission tests for a licence by feeling the vibrations of the radio code through headphones and by putting his instructions for the diagram of a transmitter on a Braille typewriter.

Deaf-Blind Londoner Becomes Successful Gardener.—A remarkable instance of conquering the normal limits of blindness, says Wm. Jaggard in *Notes and Queries*, is reported recently, from Worthing, Sussex, in the case of George Adams, aged 34, a basker-maker, evacuated from Waterloo Road, London.

Severely handicapped by being bereft since birth of sight, speech, and hearing, and never

having handled garden tools in his life until within recent weeks, he now possesses and works singlehanded an allotment 90 feet long. During the few months since commencing he has converted pasture land into arable soil, and can now show a heavy crop of all kinds of vegetables, sufficient to maintain his family. Refusing any help or guidance, he feels his way around and over his plot, and is rightly proud of what he calls his "war work"; as well he may be, for it is a model kitchen garden. All the usual printed directions on the seed packets have to be translated into deaf-and-dumb signs for him to memorise.

One Sock a Day.—The Manx Blind Welfare Society's Home Teacher informs us that Mrs. Quayle, of Albany Road, Peel, I.O.M., a blind lady over 70 years of age, has since the outbreak of war knitted an average of one sock a day for the troops.

Successes in Shorthand and Typewriting.—In the recent Royal Society of Arts Examinations the following students of the Royal Normal

College for the Blind have been successful:—

Shorthand-Typist's Certificate :

Barbara Bussey, Francis Henshaw, Marjorie Hewlett, John Meadley, Elizabeth Turley, Kathleen Wright.

Advanced Typewriting (First Class) :

Barbara Bussey, Francis Henshaw, Marjorie Hewlett, John Meadley, Kathleen Wright.

Intermediate Typewriting (First Class) :

Barbara Bussey, Kenneth Brooks, John Clarke, Olga Ferrando, Marjorie Hewlett, George Hildebrand, Myer Lazarus, Harold Tait, Elizabeth Turley, Kathleen Wright.

Intermediate Shorthand :

100 w.p.m.

Barbara Bussey, Olga Ferrando, Francis Henshaw, Marjorie Hewlett, Elizabeth Turley, Kathleen Wright.

80 w.p.m.

Gertrude Axford, Georgina Bright, Ivy Chandler, John Clarke, Vera Lloyd, Mabel Powell, Julia Watson.

Four of the above students, who completed their training at the end of July, have secured posts as shorthand-typists—Marjorie Hewlett with a large commercial firm, Francis Henshaw and Myer Lazarus in the offices of Government Departments, and John Meadley in the office of the Tottenham Court Road Workshops for the Blind.

HOME OF RECOVERY FOR WAR-BLINDED CIVILIANS, OLDBURY GRANGE, BRIDGNORTH

ONE mile out of Bridgnorth, on a hill above the Severn, stands Oldbury Grange. In May of this year this house was purchased by the National Institute for the Blind to be used as a Home of Recovery for War-Blinded Civilians. The site is well suited to its purpose, for there is a mellow quietness about this old Shropshire town where, even in these days, one can seldom hear the roar of aeroplanes in the sky. Nineteen miles from Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth is within easy reach of the Midlands and Lancashire, and particularly accessible from the North West and North Midlands. The house, too, is well fitted for its task, for if bricks and mortar can be said to have individuality, then there is an air of cosy reassurance about the whole place. There are 20 acres of ground with numerous outbuildings which are being adapted for uses connected with the Home.

In the Home to-day there are nine war-blinded civilians and six blind evacuees from blitzed cities. As the local press stated the other day, a happier crowd of people can scarcely be imagined. It is indeed the atmosphere of a Home such as this which is the all-important factor, and none who visit this Home can fail to be impressed by its cheerfulness.

Arriving at the station you will be met by a jingling pony and trap. It was the petrol shortage which made this form of transport necessary, but, like so many war-time expedients, it has proved to be a great success. As one of the residents said, "I expected a motor ambulance, and when Dobbin trotted up to meet me I felt straight away that I'd come to a good place." Immediately you find yourself engrossed in the all important problem of persuading the pony to climb the hill to the house.

Arriving at Oldbury Grange you will be struck by the liveliness of the place. The dogs bark, the hens cluck from the orchard, and two pigs—Hitler and Mussolini, they are called—grunt in the sty. The house has that indefinable scent of ripe medlars which seems always to be associated with old houses in this part of the country. The residents soon find their way about although no attempt has been made to simplify its architectural design.

In the smoke-room the politicians gather, and some of the discussions I have heard there would do justice to any debating society. In the drawing-room a group listens to the talking book. The novelty of this instrument has not yet worn off and the surprising effects which result from varying the speed of the turn-table

still bring roars of laughter. But the centre of activity is the work-room.

Here, blended with the quiet voice of the Instructor, you will hear the rustle of fingers over Braille, the tap-tap of the typewriters, and the swish of the willow canes. The atmosphere is one of concentration and intense interest, and the difficulty is often to prevent the pupils from working too hard at first. The standard of work achieved is most creditable and in a few days' time a first exhibition of cane work is to be held. Handicrafts and Braille are treated as concurrent processes and it has been proved again that the skill which handicrafts give to the fingers is a great help in the learning of Braille.

As the long winter evenings draw in the problem of recreation will become more important. Visits are arranged to the local films and to musical shows in Wolverhampton. Alone or with friends from Bridgnorth the residents find their way along the lanes and over the fields, and often the pony trap, loaded to the limit of Dobbin's toleration, goes trotting out into the countryside. Whilst I was there a Concert Party came to give an extremely good show one evening. The items were carefully studied beforehand, and afterwards one of the artists who had particular success with "Knees up, Mother Brown," said, "I have never known such an audience, please let me come again."

A great variety in types and age groups is the major problem of a Home such as this. An old lady of 82 is one of the most recent arrivals, and I have seldom seen anything more remarkable than the way in which she has rearranged her old mind to the problems which now face her. Then there is Violet, a little red head of three years old who has lost one eye. She is very much the favourite of the party and spends most of her day talking to the dogs, picking mushrooms and poking the two pigs through the bars with a cane walking-stick. Her

mother, blinded in the same raid, is already well able to look after the child, and with the new method she is learning at the Home will soon be able again to run her own flat. The majority of the men are in middle age, and for them the main problem is that of their future occupation. The whole art of rehabilitation is to provide the patient with new operative ideals to his life, and it is truly remarkable how the problem is simplified when a man comes to imagine himself already doing the work of a masseur, kiosk proprietor or telephonist. Innumerable individual problems are involved, and there is work here enough to stretch the imagination and sympathy of any man. The restoration of mental balance, the acquisition of new values and symbols, the conception of new potentialities—these are the aims of the Home. Often the patients are hypersensitive and the staff must employ immense tact in arranging the minutest details of environment. New arrivals are invited to consider their new position rationally and in accordance with modern ideas. They are taught to be blind and not to forget their blindness.

None can know what will be the extent of the problem of civilian war-blindness before this war is over. It is, however, reassuring to know that there will be room for double the present number of patients at Bridgnorth and that every day new experience is being gained by the staff. At the moment the Home is a vital institution performing well an important service in the national war effort. After this war the house may be used as a second school of the Court Grange type. "The Education of the Blind" (1936) drew attention to the need for another school along these lines and the intervening years have confirmed that opinion. However this may be, it seems that Oldbury Grange is destined to play an important rôle in blind welfare of the future.

J. F. W.

THE BLACK OUT

By CHARLES FABER.

The writer of these topical lines is a new student at the National Institute's School of Massage which since the beginning of the war has defied black-out and blitz, with splendid results.

No doubt you all know there's a war on, it's surprising how news travels round,
From the daring young lad in the Air Force to the A.R.P. squad on the ground.
Everyone knows it's through Hitler, these changes have all come about,
But the stoutest conviction is the lighting restriction or commonly called the Black-out.

Now it's getting a serious question, indeed it's the talk of the land,
For those who go out after sunset must needs take their lives in their hand;
Apart from the danger of air raids, the road seems to harbour a snare,
When you lose your direction, and make a connection with a lamp-post you soon knew was there.

But our Council has offered suggestions to help all road users at night,
Take a torch with a blue pencil battery, it will light your way homeward all right;
Have your gas-mask slung over your shoulder, it's a nuisance but don't mind the fuss,
For there's many a slip betwixt cup and lip that may land you under a bus.

Yet as I go on through the darkness my thoughts move away cross the sea
To the boys who are fighting for freedom, fighting for you and for me;
Their duty lies ever before them, God knows they may fall any way,
So just for a while let us put on a smile, for to-morrow's a lovely day.

"HOW I OVERCAME MY BLINDNESS"

This series of articles is intended to show how the many difficulties attendant on blindness can be overcome in following various occupations and professions.

X.—A MAN OF LETTERS

By JAMES ALEXANDER.

JUST after my 79th birthday, the Editor of the Braille magazine *Progress* announced an anagram competition which held the Books of the Bible within it. After sixty years of writing for newspapers I had retired from this work at the end of 1940, so had nothing to do and, as someone said, plenty of time to do it in, and I decided to try the competition. I managed fairly well, and hoped I should be the only reader of *Progress* to find these Bible names. But, alas, there were dozens of readers as clever as myself, and the prize eluded me. Being an old bachelor, it was fitting that the ladies should beat me, as a sort of revenge for leaving their sex out of account in my life story. That being so, I have decided to write down some particulars of my experiences as a journalist, in the hope that younger blind people may be induced to enter this field, where they might earn part of their living. I have found neither fame nor fortune in this occupation, but have derived great pleasure from it.

I was conscious of having only one eye ever since I have any recollection of my existence on this planet; what became of my right eye has never been revealed to me, and the eye left to me was a poor one, very limited in its extent of vision, though I did see enough to learn to read and write and count at a country school—which was all the education I got.

Why, then, do I place so ambitious a heading at the top of this article? Well, first of all I made my first acquaintance with letters when I was enrolled at the age of six in a country school in 1868. There I was introduced to the mystery of letters, and learned that these letters made up words and that these words could be strung together to make books. Thus I began early as a Man of Letters.

My friends and neighbours regarded me as a debit to the country. I was partially blind, and what could I do for a living? For some years after leaving school I assisted my mother with a little grocery shop she carried on, and then was invited by a post mistress to shoulder a postman's bag and to work for an old postman who was sick. He resigned, and the post mistress simply said I must carry on. This was in 1883, and I began on a weekly wage of seven shillings—not a very large salary, but my wants were modest—and I carried the bag for twenty-seven years,

till my eyesight gave way so badly that I could not read the addresses on the letters. Thus again I became a "Man of Letters."

My third and last claim to the title was derived from 60 years of newspaper work, and it is of this phase of my life story that I want to write. I have no desire to blow my own horn, but there is a field for blind people in writing for newspapers if they are so inclined, and if my story can help them I shall be very glad.

In 1880 I offered my services to an Aberdeen daily paper as its local correspondent. I could see to walk about, and could write if I held the paper near my eye; I failed to see things at a distance of, say, five yards, and this was a loss to me in descriptive work. However, my offer was accepted; but there was no remuneration, for in those days the penny-a-liner was unknown in rural districts. Anyhow, I started in and attended all sorts of meetings, school boards, parish councils, and the like, and sent in reports to my paper. That assisted them so far as to induce country folk to subscribe to the paper in the hope of seeing their own names in print or in order to read home news. Off and on, I carried on work of this kind even after my eyesight failed, as I had a good memory and could use a typewriter.

In 1894 my sight gave trouble once more, and after spending a great part of the year in hospital the surgeon discharged me with the ominous verdict that I should never work again. He was wrong, for though I never read ordinary print again, I could still see to walk about, and I once more took up the mail bag and carried on till 1910. And in the intervening years I made myself indispensable for the paper for which I wrote.

It came about in this way: My life has been wholly spent in the open country, where farming is the chief industry, and I am thus fairly familiar with rural life and work. In 1897 I offered to write a weekly column of Rural Notes for an Aberdeen paper, and my offer was accepted, though again without remuneration. I found it difficult, however, to get enough material at times to fill my column, and to make this good I wrote a short paragraph in the form of a talk between three farmers, in the Aberdeen dialect of the broad Scots tongue. This went on till 1900, when the Editor of the weekly edition

of the paper suggested to me that I should extend this rural talk, and he would make it a feature of his paper. I agreed, and thus began a series of dialogues which became known to all Northern Scots in all parts of the world as the Mains and Hilly Talks. I decided to have two farmers only to carry on these talks, which were on all sorts of subjects, from farming to affairs of Kirk and State. At the end of December, 1940, I retired from this work, after forty years of continuous writing. In addition to the Rural Talks I continued with my weekly Rural Notes, which were given in the daily paper each Monday. And for the weekly edition I also wrote dozens of short stories connected with rural life, and articles on various topics of antiquarian interest. One year I wrote a serial for the paper.

When I was obliged to retire from my postman's job in 1910, owing to failure any longer to

read the addresses on letters, I was given a pension of four shillings a week—a poor income, but one that was supplemented by ten shillings a week from the newspaper, later increased to twenty shillings, while if I wrote stories or other articles I could get a little more. I used a typewriter, memorising the keyboard and teaching myself by dint of hard practice. I made Braille my next acquisition, and have found the typewriter and a knowledge of Braille two of the greatest boons and blessings of my life.

And now, in my eightieth year, I have joined the ranks of the unemployed. Whether my work has been of value, I am not prepared to say. But from letters which I have received from time to time from expatriated Scots I am led to believe that these exiles derived some pleasure from my writings, and I leave the rest to posterity.

INDUSTRIAL NOTES

By BEN PURSE

FROM time to time the writer of these notes has been privileged to review the reports issued by the National Association of Workshops for the Blind, and within recent years substantial progress has been recorded. In the early days of the Association some scepticism was expressed concerning the general usefulness of the agency, but happily these doubts have been resolved, and one can say with some degree of confidence that all the available evidence points to the conclusion that the Association has come to stay and that there is an important rôle for it to play in the future that no other agency or association is better fitted to undertake.

The report just published is a simple document full of interesting facts, disclosing the practical work that has been performed during the past year, and we commend its details to all who are interested in the industrial developments of the special workshops. The year under review has been an eventful one. War conditions have afforded possibilities of service which have been thoroughly utilised. The report states: "It was always in the minds of the founders of the Association that its unity would become so marked as to make it possible by close co-operation to extend the trading facilities of workshops and home workers' schemes," and the measure of success attained certainly justifies that optimistic view. In August, 1940, the first contract was secured with the Ministry of Supply, followed subsequently by others. At the end of March, 1941, the total value of

these contracts amounted to £16,965, allocated to 38 institutions.

The executive committee of the Association experienced some anxiety when they learned that owing to the shortage of wool, Institutions for the Blind would be allocated only 50 per cent. of their pre-war consumption. It became necessary therefore to make urgent representations to the Hosiery Rationing Committee on the subject of supplies, with the happy result that it was agreed to supply the Institutions with 100 per cent. of their pre-war consumption, a decision that must have given the executive committee of the Association much satisfaction, indicating as it does the importance of united action for a common purpose.

The report makes the further pertinent observation in this connection: "The Limitation of Supplies (Woven Textiles) (No. 2) Order, 1940, specifically states that members of the National Association of Workshops for the Blind are exempt from the restrictions imposed on this section of the commercial world."

The number of workshops and home workers' schemes on the membership list at the end of the year was 46 out of a possible 51. Apart from the materials bought on behalf of the workshops engaged on Government contracts it has only been possible to buy co-operatively yarn for mat-making. The total amount involved was 1,289 bales at a cost of approximately £3,970 for the use of 24 institutions.

Sales of manufactured goods in respect of the institutions making returns, in workshops

totalled £358,201; home workers' schemes disposed of an additional £30,627, and the sale of factored goods produced £37,287. Blind employees in workshops numbered 2,181, and under home workers' schemes 640. The total trade turnover was £426,116, whilst the total blind employees numbered 3,126, which also included typists and telephone operators.

It is obvious that the character of the work undertaken by the Association is not represented by the income and expenditure account, since practically all the services are performed gratuitously. The total income for the year under review amounted to £231 9s. 6d., and after meeting all the ordinary charges, a balance of £12 15s. 10d. is carried forward to the capital account which at March, 1940, stood at £232 7s. 6d.

It is clear from the foregoing observations that the Association has performed a service to the blind community of a very commendable kind, and many of the objections which the critics urged against institutions individually and collectively are rapidly disappearing. The unwholesome inter-competition which formerly marred the reputation of some of these organisations is being steadily eliminated, and although we cannot yet profess to be entirely satisfied, the situation to-day is better far than could have been anticipated five or six years ago.

REVIEWS of REPORTS Home.

Western Counties Association for the Blind.—

The Association has been called upon to face many new and difficult problems during the year, for the counties it covers have had their inflow of evacuees on the one hand, and heavy bombing of certain vulnerable areas on the other. It is good to read that the home teachers, on whom so much responsibility now falls, "have been ready to respond to calls from raided areas whether by day or by night." An interesting table is given relating to evacuation, though it is explained that the figures given are only approximate as there is a constant flow of persons back and forth. The table is as follows: Original number received, 1,358; Returned home or died, 532; Remaining in reception area, 826. The numbers of those remaining vary considerably from county to county, in some areas as many as 80 per cent. still remaining and in others as few as 26 per cent.

The Association pays tribute to the work of

the National Institute for the Blind, whose two organising Secretaries have increased the amount raised in the area, in spite of wartime difficulties, and describes their activities as "a splendid effort."

Empire.

Society to Help Civilian Blind, Johannesburg.

—The Report records "what is to us a red-letter year" in that the Society has opened its new Institute. The building cost £24,000 and has already been paid for. It is a centre where all the blind receive help of widely varying kinds, and where the finished products of home workers are marketed. A war work party meets weekly to knit for the Forces, and many letters of appreciation have been received from men on active service. That the Institute has been described in the Press as one of the most carefully planned and up-to-date institutions for the blind is a source of great satisfaction to the Society.

Transvaal Society for the Care of Non-European Blind.—

The many friends of the Rev. A. W. Blaxall, Superintendent of this Society, look forward to reading the Report, and that for 1940 is as usual a heartening account of difficulties overcome. There are now 28 men in training, and a three-year experiment is under way, during which time as many different occupations as possible will be taught, and only obvious craftsmen go through with the complete programme of basketry and allied trades, while others will be encouraged to carry out in their own homes occupations which will provide a small income. The women's department has been re-opened, under the direction of Mrs. Blaxall and the Matron. During 1939-40 a blind ex-pupil of the Athlone School has been trained as a preacher, and is now in charge of a Mission in his homeland, having passed the usual examinations with credit.

Schools for the Blind, Palamcottah.—

The Principal of these Schools, Rev. W. G. Speight, an old St. Dunstanian, has many friends in this country, who always read the Report with interest. Among its main features for the year 1940 are news of the formation of an Advisory Board to co-operate with the Principal in arousing local interest and support, a re-grouping of classes in the Elementary section which will enable economies to be made, a successful two-day Annual Sale and a tour of blind pupils during the summer holidays under the guidance of the headmaster, when demonstrations of the work done were given. Although the Report says that the result "was not quite so good as we had hoped," such a tour, which would show at first hand what can be done by

the educated blind boy or girl, must be of special value in India, where education of the handicapped is still so little understood and appreciated. It is interesting to read how the blind pupils of the school themselves do their part in social service, contributing towards evangelistic work in the diocese, helping in the evangelistic week organised by the local church, assisting in a Sunday class for children from the neighbouring police lines and knitting for the Red Cross.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music are in accordance with a revised schedule of prices for Braille music. They represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production, and are applicable to customers throughout the world.

Dances :		s.	d.
18489	Alter, L. Dolores, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18492	Charles, H., and Miller, S. Heart to Heart, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18490	McHugh, J. South American Way, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18491	Sherwin, M. This Heart of Mine, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18,506	Charles, H. and Miller, S. What's at the top of a sunbeam? <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18,507	Nesbitt, M. & H. and Green, S. Rock-a-bye baby at twilight. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18,508	Sherwin, M. Thanks to Love. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6
18,509	Warren, H. Where you are. <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> ..	0	6

Piano Examination Music.

As in previous years, the National Institute is publishing in separate pamphlets the Piano Music of the Associated Board Examinations 1942-43 from the Preliminary to the Intermediate Grade. Lists A and B of Grades I to IV, List B of Grade V, and List A of Grade VI are in preparation, and an endeavour will be made to have the music ready for publication by November 20th.

MOON BOOKS.

4500-4515 Westward Ho ! by Kingsley. 16 vols. Limited Edition.

NEW APPARATUS.

Cat. No.	Description.	Full List Price.		Special Price to Blind Individuals.	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
9408	Moon Writing Appliance ..	1	10 0	1	0 0
9409	Rolls of paper for above, gummed ..		9		6
9410	Rolls of paper for above, not gummed ..		6		4

(This Appliance is fully described on page 162).

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

ADDITIONS.

Fiction :	Vols.
Allingham, M. Police at the Funeral ..	4
Ayres, Ruby M. One to Live With ..	2
Unofficial Wife ..	4
Bottom, Phyllis. Masks and Faces (Short Stories) ..	5
Mortal Storm ..	5
Braddon, M. E. Ishmael ..	9
Canning, V. Mr. Finchley Takes the Road ..	5
Cheyney, Peter. Another Little Drink ..	4
Connolly, Roy. Southern Saga ..	11
Crocker, B. M. Beyond the Pale ..	4
England, Jane. Flowering Veldt ..	4
Farjeon, J. J. Thirteen Guests ..	4
Gregory, J. High Hand at Rocky Bend ..	3
Heyer, Georgette. Why Shoot a Butler ? ..	4
Irwin, Margaret. The Bride ..	6
Oppenheim, E. P. Milan Grill Room ..	3
Sadler, Michael. Fanny by Gaslight ..	6
Smith, H. Lummis. Pollyanna's Western Adventure ..	3
Spring, Howard. Fame is the Spur ..	13
Steinbeck, John. Of Mice and Men ..	2
Wallace, Kathleen. Ancestral Tablet ..	6
Walpole, Hugh. Bright Pavilions ..	8
Yates, Dornford. Gale Warning ..	4
Shoal Water ..	4
Young, F. Brett. Cotswold Honey and Other Stories ..	4

Miscellaneous :

Bartlett, Capt. Sir Basil. My First War. An Army Officer's Journal for May, 1940. Through Belgium to Dunkirk ..	2
Bryant, Arthur. Unfinished Victory (E. W. Austin Memorial) ..	4
Campbell, Commander A. B. You Have Been Listening to	3
Davies, J. Langdon. Fifth Column ..	1
Divine, A. D. Merchant Navy Fights. Tramps against U-Boats ..	2
Einzig, Paul. Europe in Chains ..	2
Farson, Negley. Bomber's Moon ..	2
Lane, Margaret. Edgar Wallace ..	7
Marlowe, Dave. Coming, Sir ! ..	4
Maurois, André. Why France Fell ..	2
Morton, H. V. Women of the Bible ..	2
Mottram, V. H. Healthy Eating ..	2
Oman, Carola. Elizabeth of Bohemia (E. W. Austin Memorial) ..	8
Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs : Palestine, by James Parkes ..	1
Czechoslovakia, by R. Birley ..	
Pollard, Capt. A. V. Leaders of Britain in the R.A.F. ..	2
Read, Herbert (Editor). The Knapsack ..	8
Roberts, Cecil. And so to Bath ..	6
Temple, Dr. Wm. Citizen and Churchman ..	2
T. 124. Sea Power ..	4
Yeats-Brown, F. European Jungle (Europe in the Nineteen-thirties) ..	6

Juvenile :

Strong, L. A. G. Wrong Foot Foremost ..	2
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Grade 1 :

Hay, Ian. Stand at Ease (Stories and Memories)	3
Jacobs, W. W. Sea Urchins (Short Stories) ..	3
Struther, Jan. Mrs. Miniver ..	2

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.
30th September, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	—
<i>(Two applications under consideration.)</i>	
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	—
Wavertree House, Hove	—
The Haven, Scarborough	—

Bannow, St. Leonards	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea ..	—
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring ..	2
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay ..	13
Home of Recovery, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth	15

HENSHAW'S INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.
Mary Ann Scott Home, Harehill, Macclesfield .. 3

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES : 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

Partially sighted or sighted girls wanted as Domestic and Kitchen Helps at Worcester College for the Blind. Apply in writing, enclosing references, to Secretary, Worcester College for the Blind, Worcester.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1942.

Qualified Home Teacher, with many successes to his credit concerning past Examinations, continues to offer comprehensive postal tuition in Braille and Professional Knowledge ; also helpful guidance respecting the service as a whole. Apply (enclosing stamp) to : H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

HOMES FOR THE BLIND, FULWOOD, PRESTON.

WANTED.—Certificated or Uncertificated Assistant Mistress to take charge of Kindergarten class ; experience with blind children desirable, but not essential. Board residence provided in consideration of share supervision duties. Apply, with copies of testimonials, and state salary required to the Superintendent.

ORGANISER WANTED.

A vacancy has occurred at a branch office of the National Institute for the Blind for an Organiser (either sex). All duties money-raising. Previous experience helpful but not essential. Must be keen, energetic and produce good references. Commencing salary £195 plus expenses. Write fullest particulars to A. Stone, Secretary, National Institute for the Blind, 90, Deansgate, Manchester, 3.

CITY OF LEEDS BLIND WELFARE DEPARTMENT.
Librarian and Social Worker.

Applications are invited for the above post. Preference will be given to candidates with a knowledge of library organisation and who hold the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. The post is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful applicant will be required to pass a medical examination.

Under the present grading scheme of the Council the salary for the post is £160 per annum, together with a cost of living bonus awarded by the City Council.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, and accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned not later than the 27th October, 1941.

Canvassing in any form either directly or indirectly will be a disqualification.

Married women are not normally eligible for appointment.

GEORGE GUEST, Executive Officer.
Blind Welfare Department,
79, Roundhay Road, Leeds, 7.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind:
Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training ; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age. Exceptions to this rule may be made during the war.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF ROCHDALE.

Applications are invited from sighted males or females for the temporary post (of not less than two years duration) of Superintendent Home Teacher of the Blind at a salary of £300 per annum inclusive of travelling expenses.

Candidates, who must be under 40 years of age, must hold the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, and should have had experience of blind welfare work.

Applications should be addressed to the Director of Education and should be delivered at the Education Office, Townhead, Rochdale, not later than 22nd October, 1941.

Town Hall, HARRY BANN,
Rochdale. Town Clerk.

CITY OF CARDIFF.

Blind Persons Acts, 1920-1938.

Applications are invited for the post of Female Home Teacher and Visitor of the Blind. Candidates must be sighted and not over 50 years of age. The person appointed, if not holding the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, will be required to pass the examination within two years from date of appointment, and must have a knowledge of Braille and Moon types and the administration of the statutory provisions relating to blind persons, and also a practical ability to teach home occupations suitable for the blind. She will be required to devote her whole time to the duties and to act under the direction of the Secretary and Manager of the Cardiff Institute for the Blind. Salary £160 per annum rising by annual increments of £10 to £200 per annum, plus War Bonus (at present £12 per annum). Forms of application may be obtained from the Deputy Clerk to the Blind Persons Act Committee, City Hall, Cardiff, to whom they must be returned together with copies of three recent testimonials not later than 22nd November, 1941.

D. KENVYN REES, Town Clerk.
City Hall, Cardiff.
20th September, 1941.

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A NEW ART

By W. H. COATES.

I.

PHILOSOPHERS are given to talking about the "æsthetic senses"; meaning those through which mankind can perceive beauty. There are only two of them, it is said: sight and hearing. Every known form of art appeals to one or the other of these, and to no third sense.

But this is not to deny that there may be latent in other senses the possibility of æsthetic activity. Such activity may indeed be going on in a small way all the time, but is not recognised because it has never been developed and crystallised as a form of art. One of the most likely candidates for the æsthetic list is the important sense of touch. For biological reasons touch is highly developed in the human hands and therefore capable of fine discrimination. The more it is used, the more sensitive it becomes, and the stronger and richer its impressions; so that it may the more powerfully stir those springs of emotion which may at any moment come bubbling up into consciousness, and which we call "a sense of beauty" or "æsthetic enjoyment."

There must be many blind people who have felt this kind of pleasure while examining things with their hands; though most have probably never recognised its character. The girl who strokes the cat would not dream that she was experiencing anything even remotely akin to hearing the sound of soft music. The boy who admires the neat construction of a wireless set would never connect it with the plot of a stage comedy. In some cases the enjoyment is perhaps barely conscious; in many it is not admitted; in still more it is never mentioned. Feeling things with the hands draws attention to one's blindness; and this is a thing which many blind dislike doing because they are too conscious of their condition. Nevertheless touch can and should be one of our main gateways of knowledge and experience. The more it is used, the more abundantly will knowledge and experience flow in, and the swifter and stronger will be our response to it. Our perceptual and emotional faculties are strengthened by exercise, just as our muscles are.

Here we have the ground for an entirely new form of art. A new art! Isn't there something electric in the words? Don't they make the stalwart and well-established brain stir ever so little on its massive pedestal? I do not claim the idea as my own, but I confess that it seems to me one of the most exciting thoughts possible—a new art; one in which the blind themselves are pre-eminently fitted to be pioneers; one which might be of immense value to us, and not

without significance for humanity in general.

Yet practically nothing has been done so far to develop or even to investigate its possibilities. The handwork which goes on in schools had a different genesis. Almost the only effort I ever heard of in this direction, a very interesting experiment in touch-sculpture, unhappily shared the fate of many courageous and intelligent undertakings when the Nazis marched into Vienna. One can only hope that other beginnings will be made under more propitious stars. There has perhaps been some slight change in the attitude of those who control the destinies of the blind. We are perhaps a little less tightly glued to the economic ideal. Not that this ideal should be scrapped by any means; we must never give up the struggle for independence. But the workshop, with its depressing tale of large annual losses, blots out the whole horizon for most of us. The man with a healthy personality and all his faculties well developed, will ultimately be of more value to society than one whose sole function is by dint of the greatest labour to earn perhaps half his living.

II.

We now come to the question: What might be done in the schools to help the new art, without making any major alteration in their present curricula? Without introducing any new subject, without venturing at all up the steep and thorny path of the pioneer, we could utilise tactual perception much more than we do at present in the time-honoured lessons of the class-room.

Take geography. A certain amount of map-reading is done, but usually only a few of the pupils have any success with it. This may be partly owing to a shortage of really satisfactory maps; but it is also partly owing to our being in too great a hurry. It takes some time for a blind child to learn his way about a map. He needs to take it away somewhere by himself and study it quietly until he has found out certain things about it—the meaning of its varied markings, how to manipulate the key, its general shape, and certain salient features which will be his guiding landmarks. I myself was lucky in the matter of maps. As a child I was shut up for some weeks in hospital with nothing but a few old copies of *Progress* to read. But one of them contained a map of Central London. By the time I left hospital that map was copied in my head, and I had passed many delightful hours in making the transference. It is true I had forgotten it all again when I went to live in London years later; but I never re-learned it half so well as I had first learned

it on my back. One of the more interesting, useful and informative publications of the National Institute for the Blind is the Braille Atlas of the British Isles.

There are already a great many diagrams in Braille, ranging from the figures of the *pons asinorum* to a complete representation of the intricacies of the human central nervous system. These figures are useful and sometimes indispensable to anyone who likes to dabble in the natural sciences; yet how many readers either ignore them altogether or give them the most perfunctory examination! Most of these diagrams are attached to text-books which may be unsuitable for class use; but there is no reason why the teacher and even the pupils themselves should not make their own diagrams, within limits, with a spurred wheel and baize board, or some such simple apparatus as that. Complicated figures should, of course, be on the largest possible scale, and a generous use of letters or numbers is often helpful. One point is to maintain a sharp distinction between the various types of line used in a figure. Where, for instance, a line of heavy dots is used in the same figure as a line of faint dots, it sometimes happens that the heavy dots become diminished in places, while the faint ones are enlarged, until there is not much difference between them. And when the diagram has been spread out on the desk in the geology lesson, in the biology lesson, in the physics lesson, in the geometry lesson, there may be startling revelations about some of those simple figures. Someone may suddenly find that an equilateral triangle is a beautiful thing; I remember my own pleasure on first coming across figures in Euclid containing intersecting circles. The circle is perfection. It is the last word in its subject. That principle of the evenly-curving circumference running equidistant to, and as it were controlled by, the centre is one of the most fundamental in the universe. It is met with all the way from the atom to the solar system. Being so common, it passes without notice, but remains one of the most beautiful of primal things.

In nature study the hands have their great opportunity; especially when the classes can be held in the field. Nature provides myriads of things to feel; some of the most beautiful, some of the most horrible. Leaves are among the simplest and most pleasing—their shapes, their vein-patterns, the way they grow on their stalks, etc. There are hundreds of them, from the thick stumpy hand of the ivy to the slim, pointed, finely serrated or milled willow-leaf; from the big floppy rhubarb to the stiff, sharp tufts of pine-needles. Then there are all the

flowers, but some of these require extremely delicate handling. It is interesting, too, to examine the complete plant as it stands, to note its shape, its arrangement of leaves and flowers. On the seashore there are shells, seaweeds and curiously shaped stones to look at. Grasses, herbs, fruits, berries, birds' nests, eggs, and many other things may be included; but for the birds themselves and for animals we shall have to resort to taxidermy. Stuffed specimens are better than models in wood or metal, because they give a stronger illusion of reality (see part III of this article in the next issue).

History lessons might be illuminated by visits to museums to see pottery, implements, furniture, statuary, etc., but I can well imagine that this might be a somewhat risky undertaking with a large class of young children.

Finally, we must mention the extreme usefulness of toys in the blind child's education. His toy trains, ships, cars, aeroplanes and cranes teach him a great deal about the nature of those enormous machines which roar and screech and thunder around him. Dolls are rather a different matter, and will be discussed later.

(To be concluded.)

HOME NEWS

The Queen Buys Victory Stamps.—The Queen, who is the patron of the Greater London Fund for the Blind, has purchased £5 worth (1,200 stamps) of "V" stamps in aid of the £10,000 appeal on behalf of the 13,531 blind of Greater London.

Dr. Phyllis Tookey Kerridge Memorial Fund.—This fund, initiated in June, 1941, has reached the sum of rather over £287, and it has been decided to expend £70 on the purchase of hearing-aid equipment for the Home for the Deaf-Blind, Hoylake, to be installed when the house purchased at Hoylake for the Home is reconditioned and opened after the war. £200 has been handed over to the National Institute for the Deaf, for the purchase of hearing-aids for deaf persons attending the hearing-aid clinic at University College Hospital, inaugurated by Dr. Kerridge, or at other similar clinics, and any small balance that remains will also be transferred to the Institute for the Deaf for this purpose.

The fund is indebted to Mr. Poliakoff, director of the Multitone Electric Company, Ltd., who, as his own contribution to the fund, has undertaken to provide the hearing-aid equipment for the Hoylake Home at a cost much below that of the present-day market value.

The National Institute for the Blind will continue to act on behalf of the initiators of the fund as required, and it is a source of special happiness to the Institute that the memory of Dr. Kerridge is to be so suitably perpetuated.

Northern Counties Association: Home Teachers' Conference.—The attendance at the conference of the home teachers held at Preston on October 16th, together with the support given to the meeting held at York earlier in the year,

amply justified the decision of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind to continue their full programme so far as conferences for home teachers are concerned, despite wartime conditions.

The morning session of the Preston conference was devoted to a discussion on evacuation introduced by a paper from the secretary, in which many home teachers keenly participated. In the afternoon a paper, *How We Learn*, was read by Miss Gladys Conway, M.A., of the Manchester University, and was heard and discussed with much interest and profit. A notable feature of the conference was the extent to which, during the latter part of the afternoon session, a variety of questions was submitted by individual home teachers for general discussion, and a considerable amount of useful information was disseminated in this way.

This conference, which was presided over by Mr. W. Kershaw, the Chairman of the Association, was one of a series which, without interruption over a period of many years, have given regular opportunities for home teachers in the North to meet and discuss their problems to the manifest advantage, not only of themselves, but of the blind they serve.

Damages Awarded to Blinded Man.—Assize Court damages of £2,250, awarded to a collier, John Dunn, Nuneaton, against the Birmingham and Midland Motor Omnibus Company, have been increased by £2,000 on his appeal at the Court of Appeal.

Mr. Dunn was thrown from a bus when it started suddenly. As the result of his injuries one eye had to be removed and sympathetic trouble developed in the other, so that he is now totally blind.

Travelling Facilities for the Blind.—We are advised by the London Passenger Transport Board that all passes held by blind persons in respect of buses, trams and trolleybuses in the Greater London area, will expire on December 31st, 1941, and they must be returned in due course to the Commercial Officer, London Passenger Transport Board, Hillingdon (Met.) Station Huts, Hillingdon, Middlesex. Application forms for renewal will be sent to all holders of current passes where the addresses are known. Persons who have effected removal in the meantime must please accept this as an official intimation that they must apply either to the National Institute for the Blind or to the London Passenger Transport Board for the necessary form which must be completed before a new pass can be issued.

Domiciliary Assistance in Middlesex.—Middlesex Education Committee have considered a report on the question of increasing the residue of wages which wage-earning relatives of blind persons are assumed to retain for their own maintenance by a percentage equal to the increased cost of living on the sliding scale already adopted for the grant of assistance to the blind persons themselves and their dependants. The proposed increase would also apply to the residue of the income of blind applicants not in receipt of assistance under Part I of the Scheme.

The general effect would be to place these wage-earning blind persons and relatives in their pre-war positions as regards the purchasing value of the residue of their wages.

National Institute for the Blind: Shop Hours.—The hours of business of the Institute's shop in Gt. Portland Street from Monday, November 17th, will be 8.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The earlier hour in the morning has been adopted to meet the convenience of customers, and the closing hour of 4 p.m. to bring the shop into line with other West End places of business.

A Question in the House.—Sir Robert Young recently asked the Minister of Health whether he was satisfied that the purpose for which the pensionable age of a blind person was reduced from 50 to 40 had been realised or whether his attention had been called to the extent by which local authorities had caused the financial benefits of the amended Act to be reduced or cancelled; and what steps he proposed to take to give to eligible blind persons the benefit intended for them?

The Minister, in reply, stated that it was always contemplated that a local authority in granting financial assistance to a blind person under the Blind Persons Acts would take into account the amount of any old age pension

received by him; and one of the objects of reducing the pensionable age for blind persons was to secure that the burden of providing assistance to blind persons should be shared between the Exchequer and the local authorities. He saw no need, therefore, for any special action in the matter.

Generosity of English Readers of "The Readers' Digest."—In June, 1940, the Readers' Digest Association, Ltd., sent a cheque for £59 14s. 3d. to the National Institute for the Blind as a contribution for the benefit of persons blinded in air raids. The Association has now sent a further cheque of £50 7s. 4d. for the same purpose, the two amounts representing money subscribed by English readers of the American "Readers' Digest," which would normally have been applied towards the cost of the Braille edition of the magazine, which has a considerable circulation among the British blind.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Thomas Singlehurst, donor of the Singlehurst ward at Northampton General Hospital and of a surgical ward at Creton Sanatorium, and benefactor to many other charities.

Some 27 years ago, Mr. Singlehurst's sight began to fail, and eventually he became completely blind. His practical sympathy for his fellows had been the greatest trait of his life's work, and it was, therefore, not surprising, although it did not lessen the appreciation of his generosity, when in 1923 he handed over to Northampton General Hospital the deeds of a new ophthalmic department now known as the Singlehurst Ward. He was an active member first of the committee of the Northampton Blind Association and later of the Town and County Blind Association.

Thomas Reynolds, for many years one of the best known taximen in Northampton, who was blinded when a tree fell on his car during a thunderstorm 19 years ago. At one time he controlled a successful motor taxi enterprise of his own.

We greatly regret to hear as we go to press of the death of the **Rt. Hon. C. A. McCurdy, P.C., K.C.**, who has been the National Institute's Hon. Adviser on Propaganda since 1928. Mr. McCurdy placed his great ability and experience at the Institute's disposal in the most unassuming way, and his death is a great loss. A further note will appear in next month's issue.

THE SERVERS OF THE BLIND LEAGUE WARTIME HOME

THROUGH the generosity of the British War Relief Society Inc. of the U.S.A., who contributed towards the running expenses and gave equipment, it was possible to open the Servers of the Blind League Wartime Home at Arreton House, Woking, in Surrey, in May, 1941, and on Tuesday, October 28th, the Home was honoured by an official visit from Mrs. Drexel Biddle, wife of the American Ambassador to the Allied Governments. She was received at the Home by Lady Emily Lutyens, Vice-President of the League, who also welcomed Mr. Bertram de N. Cruger, Representative in Great Britain of the British War Relief Society Inc. of the U.S.A., and other distinguished guests.

The guests made a tour of the Home and talked with some of the blind men and women, who had come from London, Portsmouth, Southampton, Bristol, Coventry, Liverpool, Dover, vulnerable parts of Kent and Essex, and other bombed areas. After they had inspected the spacious lounges, dormitories, sunny balconies and sick ward, the guests were given tea, and Mr. R. H. Spurrier, Chairman of the League, told how this Wartime Home for the Blind came into being, and said that it was an expansion of the work of the League which was imperatively demanded by the profoundly moving and urgent need of human suffering. After referring briefly to the other work of the League at the Ellen Terry National Homes and in organising Social Clubs for Adult Blind, Mr. Spurrier said that Arreton House is now the home of fifty-seven blind men and women who have been rendered homeless by enemy action and who have been evacuated from dangerous areas. The loss and shock to many had been grievous and heavy, but here they were finding sanctuary and healing, thanks in large measure to the very generous help given to the League by the British War Relief Society.

After Mr. Spurrier had read a telegram of greeting from Princess Marie Louise, Patroness of the League, Mrs. Drexel Biddle said: "First of all I want to tell you how very happy I am that you issued the invitation to me to come and be with you for a little while this afternoon and to give me the opportunity of seeing this lovely Home which has been a really inspiring sight. I have been taken upstairs to see the different rooms, and I saw the detail, the loving care that had been taken in each room. It is the small thing, it is not the big thing that really adds up to make the atmosphere of a home. I always think that when you come inside you feel just

as much the personality and the atmosphere of the house and the people who are living in it as you do when you meet and come in contact with an individual, and the atmosphere here has come to me as a very wonderful one, and the opportunity that I have had to-day to come and share with you, even for a short time, I shall always remember."

She went on to say that she was most impressed by the spirit of service, of kindness and helpfulness that is abroad. She had seen what the bombing had done to London and the ports, and she knew what it must mean to the blind people to live in this lovely Home and to find peace and the companionship of friends. She had the greatest sympathy for the work that the League was doing, and was proud that her compatriots had contributed something to a cause so valuable and worth while.

Mr. Cruger expressed his delight with the Home and said: "I also am glad to be here, very glad indeed. My people at home have from the very first been keenly interested in the problem of civilian help. Some of them who organised the Society of which I am the representative here seem to have had the feeling that Britain was in for a hard time, and we started soon after the war began. I consider it one of the greatest privileges that could possibly have been conferred on anyone to have been selected to do this job. I was, therefore, utterly glad to be in a position, when the plight of this particular place was brought to my attention, to do what I could in the name of my Society to help them over the hard spots, but now, after having arrived here and having seen what you have done, I realise for myself from only a short observation the atmosphere of content and peacefulness that seems to pervade this house. These gifts from America come from the most part from simple, friendly people from all parts of the United States, who are keenly alive to what has been happening in Britain and who are more than anxious to show that they are behind you."

Sir Philip Henriques, K.B.E., Chairman of the Western District Emergency Committee for Civil Defence, Surrey, welcomed Mrs. Drexel Biddle to the county of Surrey and spoke of the excellent work that is done by voluntary societies co-operating with local authorities.

Lady Emily Lutyens thanked Mrs. Drexel Biddle for so kindly visiting the Home, and was seconded by Miss G. M. Sandes, F.R.C.S., M.B., B.S., Chairman of the Wartime Home Committee.

SCHEME FOR THE TRAINING AND RE-SETTLEMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS

By BEN PURSE.

RECENTLY the Ministry of Labour has published outlines of an interim scheme for the employment and re-settlement of disabled persons. It is nearly two years since representatives of the National Institute for the Blind and other organisations directed the attention of various Government departments to this matter, but although the attitude of the officials was sympathetic, it was by no means inspired by an enthusiasm which gave the impression that prompt action would be taken. We were naturally disappointed, but a dogged persistence, together with the growing requirements of the situation, seem to suggest that at long last appropriate action is seriously contemplated. It must not be assumed, however, that the interim scheme is so fashioned as merely to take note of claims made by organisations existing for the welfare of the blind, though we assume with some degree of confidence that competent blind persons will receive their quota of service when the proposed plans take definite shape.

In a prefatory note to the scheme the following observations are made: "A large increase in the number of disabled men and women is one of the inevitable results of war. In addition to members of the Fighting Services, the Merchant Navy and the Civil Defence Services disabled on war service, there are civilians injured through air raids, accidents in factories, etc. The re-settlement in civil life of these disabled men and women (including training for a new occupation where that is desirable) is a matter of importance. Not only is there a national obligation to give all possible help to those citizens who have suffered the ill-fortune of war, but it is in the interest of the country as well as of the disabled citizen that he should get back to suitable employment as soon as possible—not to *any* employment, but to the most skilled work of which he is capable. Experience has proved that in many kinds of employment certain disablements are far less of a handicap than is popularly supposed, and that with skilful training and proper care, large numbers of disabled men and women can hold good jobs through their own merits and not simply because of considerate treatment."

To those who are familiar with these problems of rehabilitation, the foregoing statement will seem to be commonplace, but it is of primary importance that the truth should at length have

been recognised in official circles, and that prompt action is premeditated. The following quotation is of equal importance because it clinches the point of view which we have so frequently expressed in these columns: "The winning of the war demands the full use of all available labour, and disabled men and women can make a valuable contribution to this end—in some cases by entering the munitions industries; and in others, by taking jobs in which they can set other men and women free for war work."

The scheme is open to all persons over the age of 16, whatever the cause of disablement: it is not limited to those whose incapacity can be directly attributed to the present war. It is intended for those who are unfitted by disablement from resuming their normal occupation and for others who are handicapped by disablement from obtaining satisfactory employment.

The training schemes already in operation under the Ministry of Labour can and will be so expanded and enlarged as to provide the necessary facilities for giving training to a much larger number of handicapped people; and with such modifications as are necessary, training will be given in the Ministry of Labour Instructional Centres, in technical schools and colleges, with employers, and in other institutions designed to meet the requirements of the situation. As far as the scheme has proceeded, the following occupations have been enumerated, but it is obvious that the reorganisation of labour and the recruitment of personnel will leave vacancies in other spheres of employment and will enable other handicapped people to perform duties which the degree of disability and the character of their limitations should enable them to enter. The occupations so far enumerated are: draughtsmanship, fitting, instrument making, machine operating, electric and oxy-acetylene welding, electrical installation, inspecting and viewing, light lorry driving, garage mechanic, sheet metal working and panel beating, radio fault finding and testing, and storekeeping. It is conceded that the foregoing list of pursuits from the very nature of things must be incomplete, but it by no means excludes the employment of non-seeing people from many of the industries mentioned, whilst an effective scheme of reorganisation could easily bring into service personnel for the operation of the dictaphone, the telephone switchboard, steno-

graphy and typing, and large numbers of mechanical operations available in engineering works. Numerous pianoforte tuners who possess a high degree of manipulative skill are known to be available, whilst many craftsmen would be much more usefully and economically employed if occupied in pursuits of more urgent national importance.

If there is any disparity between the economic earnings of these people and other men and women who would be drafted into industry, there would appear to be no reason why these deficiencies could not be made good by an augmentation of wages grant which might very properly be provided by the county and borough councils who are already legally responsible for the proper maintenance of all blind persons residing in their respective areas. Such an action on the part of the municipal authorities would be a helpful and a generous gesture—it would merely be a pension conferred in another way. It is thought that in the majority of cases a maximum period of 26 weeks' training will be sufficient, but this may be reduced or extended as circumstances may determine. The cost of training under the scheme will be met by the Ministry of Labour. On the vexed subject of remuneration the interim scheme observes: "Weekly allowances at the following rates will be paid to disabled persons receiving training:

Age	Men and Boys		Women and Girls	
21 and over	..	42s.	..	33s.
20	..	33s.	..	31s.
19	..	30s.	..	28s.
18	..	23s.	..	21s.
16—17	..	17s.	..	15s.

In addition each trainee will receive (a) a dinner-meal or 5s. per week in lieu thereof; (b) daily travelling expenses when necessary; (c) dependants' allowances at the rate of 7s. 6d. per week for a wife, or in certain circumstances other adult dependant, and 3s. per week for each child. If the training is given away from the home area, a trainee who continues to maintain his former home will receive an additional allowance based on the lodging rate in the place of training—normally 21s. per week. Trainees aged 16—18 who are living away from home will receive, instead of the rates mentioned above, the lodging rate together with a sum for pocket money. The allowance payable to a person in training will be based on the above scale without regard to any pension, allowance or other payment that he may receive in respect of his disability."

We think that the foregoing scales are reasonable and even generous in a period of national

emergency, and no very great difficulty should arise in providing the requisite man power. It is well known that certain belligerent countries have been utilising this form of labour for some considerable time. We have seen large numbers of disabled people at work in other countries in engineering shops and in allied industries, and we are confident that the men and women whose services are available in Britain and Northern Ireland could give a satisfactory account of themselves both in manipulative skill and in general economic usefulness. The Ministry of Labour should brook no further delay in this matter, for the national emergency transcends all other considerations.

Readers who are anxious to obtain more detailed information should apply to the offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service in their respective areas. They should ask for Circulars PL. 89, 90 and 93.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Telephonist Makes Good.—Mr. Alec Potts, a former Leeds air-raid warden who is now blind, has proved a great success on the telephone switchboard of a wholesale warehouse in the city.

"We are amazed at the way he has handled the job," said the general manager of the firm. "He not only manages 20 extensions, but takes messages and passes them forward.

"For years I wanted to employ a blind person on the switchboard. I can strongly recommend such an appointment to any business firm."

A Mind Emerges.—Four years ago, Brother Graveline, of the Catholic Institute for the Deaf, Montreal, was given charge of a small boy of six, named Gaston Robetaille, who, at the age of two, had been rendered blind, deaf and dumb, after an attack of scarlet fever.

The boy was hostile, almost savage. In four months he had had six serious futile operations. He snarled at anyone who approached him.

Making contact was no easy problem. It required months of hard work, but "gradually Gaston ceased snarling, making a delightful gurgle instead, when his hair was ruffled or his ear tweaked."

Brother Graveline's success "is an epic of the struggle of a darkened mind towards the light." The boy could not hear any instructions, nor could he see signs, but to-day he reads and writes Braille, and carries on conversations with

his teacher and with other pupils by means of signs. He has a vocabulary of 500 French words, for he is a French boy, and besides knowing French grammar, has acquired the rudiments of arithmetic.

A.R.P. Worker.—Blind almost from birth, Herbert Hough (35) operates a fire brigade headquarters switchboard at Longsight, Manchester, swims, rows, and is a good darts player. He formerly fitted in part-time A.R.P. work with his duties as financial organiser to the Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society.

Blind Man's Invention Wins a Bronze Medal.—Mr. Thomas Burke, a blind basket maker employed at St. Joseph's Asylum for the Blind, Dublin, has been awarded a bronze medal by the National Industrial and Development Committee's Inventions Committee, for a basket-making device.

Chess Prizewinner.—Mr. Andrew Forrester, a blind organist from Stirling, is the winner of the British Chess Federation Braille Correspondence Tournament.

Blind Men and Women Help the War Effort.—Mr. Fred Brown, a Birmingham worker, who recently made a wicker log basket and raffled it, raised £6 7s. 6d. by the draw, and has sent the money to the Ministry of Aircraft Production; while Mr. Alfred Morton, who has written verses on the war, called "A Blind Man's Musings," and has sold them at a penny a copy, has handed over the proceeds amounting to £4 to the Spitfire Fund; he took the donation himself to the Lady Mayoress on his 87th birthday. Sixty girls of the bedding department of the Glasgow Blind Asylum saved £1 4s. last month and sent the money to the Tank Fund of a local newspaper.

SPLINTERS OF THE BLITZ

Being Rhymes from the odd thoughts of a blind man during the air raids

By H. S. KEEN

(These Rhymes were originally in the form of a little booklet, ingeniously constructed by the writer, with the verses typewritten and affixed to the pages. This accounts for the witty Introduction, which is "No Introduction," and the Epilogue, with its compliance with Lord Beaverbrook's recent appeal for paper.)

No Introduction

There is no Preface to my verse;
Shaw would not take the hint.
Perhaps it was a compliment
To leave me room to print!
Besides, no tramp nor shepherd, I.
But still I won't be hid.
So accept this as a Foreword,
From a forward Cockney kid.

Unanimous

A pity 'tis our different views
Should part us in fair weather.
Against a common enemy
We come so close together.

Beyond the Pale

The prayer "God make good people kind,
And make kind people good,"
Made one enquiring spirit ask,
Just where Herr Hitler stood!

Could I with Love

Could I with love encompass all the world,
With rainbow arms the hearts of men enfold,
(Hate and decay to outer darkness hurled),
What living beauty from the earth I'd mould!

Past and Present

They say the old live too much in the Past.
Perhaps they're wise, in case the Present last!
(This thought occurred whilst suffering from
the blast.)
And now more rationing has been suggested,
How else but live on dinners long digested?

Judgment Seat

The Patriots were lining up
To take their praise or blame.
But as they had no flags with them,
They all looked just the same!

Grey Matter

What stunted mind, housed in such bestial bone,
That would in war the faults of peace atone.
Mind so divine when hope comes thrusting
through,
Learns from the past, and builds the dream anew.

The Awakening

Had Hitler's dream been analysed by Freud,
I think the Fuehrer might have been annoyed
By candour far too crude.
But when at last the truth he comes to see,
Worse than the dream, awakening will be
Quite definitely rude!

Castles in the Air

I built a FUTURE full of flowers,
Omitting even summer showers.
I built a FUTURE, bit by bit,
I built a future. This is it!

So every mortal builds anew,
And gets the joy of building, too ;
But 'twould be HEAVEN to find it true!

Modernity

Epstein I carved, and painted him red ochre.
So true to life, they thought him mediocre.
Once more my old Victorian plaques I hang,
To give the atmosphere a modern tang!

In Print

He lived to write, but would not write to live ;
So editors had mere "regrets" to give.
His name's in print, but not beneath his rhymes.
It's an Obituary Notice in *The Times*.

Dear friend and poet, raconteur and wit,
Lucky you left enough to pay for it!

Poems of Good Address

Chelsea

The doggerel and catagraph
Were "Chelsea" to their tails.
They wouldn't have South Kensington
Writ large upon their mails.

But doggerels would whisper,
And catagraphs would talk . . .
They'd seen them buy their offals
Too far from Cheyne Walk.

But when his verse was published,
And she had something hung,
They had no time for Chelsea,
Its praise was never sung.

Quite openly they now admit
The site of their abode :
It's a cosy furnished bedroom
Very near the Edgware Road.

The Ape

He couldn't pass in Mayfair ;
Even Hampstead thought him low ;
So he tried to live at Ealing,
In his suit from Savile Row.

The moral to the story ?
Should you inherit "dough,"
Why play the ape in Balham ?
You can be yourself at Bow!

Haughty Culture

See how the bookworms round the weeds do
browse
Where hardy annuals make their gallant show.
They miss the rarer blossoms' gay carouse ;
For still no sign of budding Shakespeares grow.

Sound Advice

When you hear the moaning sirens,
Boom of guns, and drone of planes ;
Shuddering thud, and hurtling "whistler,"
THINK . . . of quiet . . .
Cornish . . . lanes !

A. R. P.

Sing a song of sirens
Wailing in the gloom.
Vulgar German eaters
Seeking elbow-room.
Sing a song of cockneys
Stripping for a fight,
Black-eyed homes of London
Grinning in the night.

Christ Mass

Around the throne at Christmastime
The children kneel awhile,
To see (Dear God, How beautiful)
The Man of Sorrow smile.

Departure

We who by the dying fires
Wait with folded hands
For the sailing of God's ships
To His Other Lands ;
Ancient wisdom have we lost
With the passing years ;
And the knowledge we have won
Has been wrung from Tears :
For our hopes and fleeting joys
We have many sighs.
White-limbed innocence has gone,
Laughter in the eyes.
We may find again our Faith,
In the child heart.
Peace, life's crown, God giveth us
When our ships depart.

Epilogue

Don't burn my book.
No phoenix lies
Between its pages small ;
Nor, like "Mein Kampf,"
Hides adder out to crawl.
Don't burn my book.
THE SALVAGE MAN WILL CALL.

EVACUATION OF THE BLIND IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND

By J. CHALLINOR, Secretary, Northern Counties Association for the Blind

THE opening of two new Homes for Blind Evacuees by the Northern Counties Association for the Blind, marks the culmination of considerable effort to deal with this particular wartime problem, in the course of which it has been necessary to surmount many difficulties.

The Association at no time took the view that, because so few blind people originally took advantage of the Government Evacuation Scheme, and that a large proportion of these few speedily returned home, nothing further need be done in the matter. An investigation carried out in the early days of the war, and covering most of the places to which their blind had been evacuated, inside the region and beyond, convinced them that there were reasons for this which could be dealt with; e.g., unsatisfactory financial arrangements and unsuitable accommodation.

After full consideration of the report on the investigation the Association's Executive were convinced that, if suitable hostels could be set up, where the blind could live in comfort and reasonable safety, these would be fully appreciated and quickly occupied by blind persons desirous of removing from the dangers of the target areas.

Search was accordingly made for premises which could be put to such use, but considerable difficulty was experienced in finding anything suitable which was not already earmarked for other purposes. But the need was urgent, so at the end of last year the Cinderella Home, Honley, near Huddersfield, was opened, and blind people from Merseyside, Sheffield, Bradford, Leeds and Barrow-in-Furness were accommodated there. Conditions here, however, fell short of what was really considered adequate, and the search continued. As a result the Association is now in possession of two well-equipped houses, one at Holmfirth, in Yorkshire, and the other at Nelson, in Lancashire. Here in comfort and in reasonably safe areas accommodation for some seventy blind persons has been provided and is already fully taken up.

Each house stands in its own grounds, which provide ample opportunities for exercise and enjoyment. The Matron, in each case is a fully qualified nurse, and, in the larger home at Nelson, a full-time Social Worker is employed and lives in the Home.

This does not mean the end of the Association's efforts in this direction. It is known that many

more blind persons would welcome the opportunity to leave some of the danger spots for residence in such homes and efforts are being made to find further premises in which to extend this work. In addition, the problem of dealing with blind evacuees from London who are unsuitably housed remains to be dealt with more fully than has so far been possible.

The progress so far made has called for a great effort on the part of the Emergency Committee and the staff, and the financial aspect, particularly in connection with the equipment, is not without its anxious side. Material financial assistance was given in connection with the equipment of the Home at Nelson both by the National Institute for the Blind and Gardner's Trust, but this has still left heavy expenditure to be borne by the Association's funds.

The comfort of the residents, however, and their relief to be out of danger and under such favourable circumstances, is more than adequate recompense for the efforts made, and the Association feels more than justified in having so actively taken up this new work.

PERSONALIA

PROFESSOR JAMES DREVER, F.R.S.E., of the Chair of Psychology in Edinburgh University, has been appointed chairman of the Board of Directors of the Royal Blind Asylum and School, Edinburgh. His appointment follows the resignation of Mr. J. B. Adshead, who has been chairman since 1938, when he succeeded the late Dr. Thomas Burns.

* * *

MR. G. A. WILCOX, manager of West Ham Council's Blind Workshops since their inception in 1932, has been appointed factory manager to the Royal Midland Institution for the Blind, Nottingham.

* * *

MR. GEORGE PRESTON, a blind evacuee from Wandsworth, now living at Dunster, recently celebrated his 101st birthday. Among telegrams of congratulation were two from the Somerset Association for the Blind and the corresponding organisation for the Metropolis; and the birthday was mentioned by the B.B.C.

* * *

MRS. MACMILLAN has resigned her post as Secretary to the Essex County Association for the Blind for domestic reasons.

BLIND MEN AND WOMEN AS WRITERS

FOR some years the Editor of THE NEW BEACON has aimed at making this paper one in which the blind writer may give his seeing friends engaged in the work of administration of blind welfare the benefit of his immediate experience of problems which they, however great their good-will, can only know at second-hand. But it has not been easy to persuade blind people to contribute to our pages, and there have been months when it has seemed all too likely that no "copy" from blind writers would be forthcoming. However, of late there has been a remarkable change; the Editor's basket has (rather ironically at a moment when paper restrictions compel us to cut down rather than expand our pages) suddenly become filled to overflowing with contributions from blind writers, of such merit that the rejection-slip with its suave and meaningless expression of regret cannot honestly be called into play.

In the ten months from January to October of this year, there have been in THE NEW BEACON twenty-two signed articles by blind men and women. They have covered a wide range. One writer, an expert on legislation affecting the blind, has dealt with the intricacies of supplementary old age pensions and with workshop problems of reorganisation. A home teacher has contributed an article on his work of visiting the aged blind in the once princely mansions of a Dublin slum. Other writers have told of their wartime experiences; a blind parson wrote of family prayers in the dim light of an air-raid shelter, a blind grocer of his struggles with ration books and—perhaps this is the most remarkable of all—a blind mill manager of the part that Braille has played in helping him to carry on his work in a vulcanised fibre-making factory, largely engaged in war-production. One contributor has enriched our pages with a colourful study of a blind man's flower garden before potato and turnip ousted lily and rose; the daughter of a Scottish manse has recaptured the cheerful homeliness of life in a country parish; another Scot has written of his work as the writer of a weekly column of Rural Notes in a local newspaper; and a writer of verse in his "Birds of Passage" has shown that the poet need not depend on visual imagery: "*The lane is filled with sun . . . The sleeping lane is heavy with hawthorn.*" Others have dealt with the relation of the blind child (and particularly the young blind child) to his family; of the implications of the term "the blind world;" of the blind man's response to literature.

Yes, it is a mixed bag; and for that very reason it is both interesting and important; for it shows that the blind writer can cover a field as wide as the seeing, and can throw light, not only on those problems that belong especially to his own province, but on those also that are common to us all.

The last few years have seen a great outpouring of books by seeing writers about the blind—"literature of opinion," to use the rather telling phrase of an American writer, as contrasted with "literature of fact." And remarkably silly opinion at that, pretty often! They have been mainly novels, with blind heroes who are sometimes held up as prodigies because they recognise their friends when they hear their voices (do these novelists never use the telephone, one wonders) or—more startlingly—because they can distinguish colours by touch or never bump into objects on account of their sense of obstacles. One cannot help hoping that some day perhaps one of the blind writers who contribute so ably to our pages may try his hand at the character study of a blind man. He certainly would not be guilty of such absurdities as those committed by the author of "The Rosary," where the blind artist fails to recognise his former sweetheart when she becomes his nurse, or where the same blind man sits in his library and uses a blue string to find his way to his piano, a green one to lead him to his typewriter and a yellow one to guide him to his bookcase!

THE EDITOR.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

By C. MARSOM.

I.

IT has been asked: "Is there a World of the Blind and, if so, what is it?" I would answer that there is, just as there are worlds of literature, of music, of business and of sport. Indeed, it is more true to speak of the world of the blind than of any of those I have mentioned, because, whereas the others only touch one aspect of the lives of their members, blindness affects every phase of our existence. Admittedly we may do many of the things that the more fortunate of our fellows do, but we are obliged to approach them in our own way. For instance, even the simple process of shaving must be accomplished without the aid of a mirror. We have to use our memory for getting about—even in our own homes—as well as for finding objects which may be within our reach, and would only require a glance by anyone with sight. Although we may belong to one or more of those other worlds, sharing the interests of people with full vision, through the very nature of blindness, we find more common grounds with the blind members of such circles than with the rest. I am sure that most of us feel more at home with another blind person, quite irrespective of age, sex, position or general environment. Our blindness will be taken for granted. Quite likely we shall find that we have special interests in common, which, although not confined to the blind, we tend to follow through the limitations of our handicap. If we had sight, our inclinations might have led us along some other channel. Many blind are chess players; they might have been more interested in cricket, tennis, golf or motoring, if they could see. We may have taken up literature or music, whereas sight might have made us more keen on painting or nature study. We have a stronger bond of interest with another blind reader than a seeing one, because the same magazines and books are available to us. We can correspond much more freely when we know that a third person will not be needed to read the letters. We cannot attain the same degree of intimacy with our seeing correspondents (except for the few who can write Braille) because of the restraint imposed by the knowledge that another will have to be brought in to read the letters. It may be that we are not interested in the same pastimes as our new blind acquaintance, but we still have plenty in common with him. We can give each other all kinds of wrinkles on how we cope with a variety of little problems arising out of our blindness. It is

rather like two housewives giving each other tips on running a house. We have also the common interest of special apparatus such as watches, games, and writing equipment. We also swap experiences of our contacts with the sighted world. Even so, I feel certain that the most important factor of our understanding is the feeling that we shall be treated normally, like human beings.

For my own part, I think that all blind welfare societies should have a blind home visitor on their staff. He knows from his own experience the feeling that comes with blindness: that everything that is worth having in life is at an end. He is best fitted to help the newly blind to readjust himself to the strange and bewildering circumstances which confront him. He can be both a sympathetic friend and a practical demonstration that all is not over; that there are still plenty of interests and joy to be found in life, if the newcomer to the blind world is prepared to face up to it.

But the blind world idea can be overdone. I mean, it is a bad thing for the blind to be segregated from the rest of the world. They should be encouraged to make friends among the larger community, and to mix with people generally, or their outlook may become narrow and they will lose much by it. It seems to me to be undesirable to establish permanent clubs for the blind, unless there is a very large blind community. Yet it does seem beneficial to organise occasional gatherings for the blind of a district, to enable them to make new friends, or keep up their contacts with old ones.

II.

It has been deplored that some of the most capable among the blind have very little intercourse with the blind world. They prefer to make their way in another sphere of life, though their talents might well be employed to better the common lot of the blind. It is probably much easier for a blind man to make his mark in the outside world than to be recognized by those who control the administration of blind welfare. Blind welfare is run by committees who often have little knowledge or understanding of the blind. Most organisations for the welfare of the blind seem to prefer to employ a seeing person than a blind one, and put all kinds of obstacles in the way of the latter.

Many of the seeing administrators in the world of the blind make no serious effort to appreciate the psychology of the blind, nor do

they encourage the blind to make an independent stand in life. The problem of employment of the blind has never been properly tackled. Years ago, Henry Ford showed, in a book on his methods of mass production, that the blind could be employed in industry on an economic basis, instead of as a charitable enterprise, yet practically nothing has been done in this direction. Even now, when it is so vitally urgent to make the most of all available man-power, we are kept in heavily subsidised blind workshops, often doing unsuitable jobs.

It may not be a conscious effort to justify their position, but it does seem that managers of such enterprises consider their services indispensable to the blind. Something was said to one such manager about the need to place blind workers in ordinary factories. His objection was that a blind person might trip over something which somebody had left in the way, which seems a trifling reason for not trying to find economic work for us. Many of the jobs practised by the blind in blind workshops are dangerous. For example: brush-makers have to use boiling pitch and it is quite easy for them to be badly scalded by it; a basket-maker can receive a nasty cut if his knife should slip. Another aspect of the employment of the blind is, that it is often taken for granted that blind workshops must be run at a loss, no real attempt being made to make them pay. Nothing is done to bring their methods up to date and in line with modern production.

III.

The extent of the ignorance concerning the blind which is prevalent among the general public is both surprising and irritating. They are seldom able to take our blindness naturally, which often causes us to appear at our worst when meeting strangers. I think that most of us warm to the new acquaintance who, on being introduced, simply talks to us in the same way in which he would converse with an ordinary seeing person whom he is meeting for the first time, without referring to our handicap, or firing off all kinds of personal questions which he would never have the cheek to do with other people. It is not only strangers who treat us abnormally. If our acquaintances do not consider us to be of a lower mental order, they will probably give us credit for possessing some superhuman sense, like distinguishing colour by touch. I am afraid that this is helped by some of the blind, who like to show off; they may be able to pick out a certain colour from a number of articles, but keep it a secret that they are able to do so by the texture, or size, not by the actual colour.

I wonder how many times a blind person has been approached with: "Do you know who I am?" An American who was asked this question countered with: "Yes—do you?" Most blind people are pretty well expert at recognizing anybody by their voice, but why don't those people take it for granted that we shall know them, or not, according to the extent of our acquaintance?

Another source of annoyance is the way so many people communicate with the blind through an intermediary. Usually, the third person does not take the trouble to correct this absurd state of affairs and it is difficult for the blind to do so without appearing to be rude.

We are usually expected to be completely ignorant of the district, although we may be moving about in it without a guide. As an instance of this: one evening, two men were leaving their work when a woman approached them with: "Can you direct me to the hospital—oh, I'm very sorry, I didn't notice that you were blind!" Yet, why shouldn't they know?

What is needed is to be treated normally, but we should do our best to deserve it. We should try to act as normally as possible and endeavour to overcome our resentment at the irrational way others act towards us. We should remember that it is not meant unkindly, but is done with the friendliest motives. We should never impose on good-nature, on the excuse of being blind, nor rebuff those who offer us help which we can quite well do without. There are other blind persons who might be glad of such help, but the would-be Samaritan might be reluctant to offer his aid after one blunt refusal. If one blind person displays bad manners, it may create the impression that it is a trait common to all blind. A sense of humour will often smooth out a trying situation.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributions to a Psychology of Blindness.

Under this title and under the auspices of the American Foundation for the Blind, Dr. Samuel Hayes has gathered under one cover papers contributed over a period of years to the *Outlook for the Blind*, *The Teachers' Forum* and *Proceedings of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind*. The book is one which may depress the English teacher of the blind at the same time as it pleases him. For while it will give him pleasure to have a comprehensive account of the work of intelligence

testing in America and the results attained during continuous research, stretching over more than a quarter of a century, it may depress him to realise that so far over here he has little to put alongside it. Much has undoubtedly been done, and wisely done, for the education of blind children in this country, but an examination of Dr. Hayes's bibliography, with its references to monographs on the comparative sensitiveness of blind and seeing persons, on the spatial threshold of touch in blind and seeing children, in auditory memory and tactual sensibility of the blind, does show that we lag some way behind the States in a study of the psychology of the blind.

The first part of Dr. Hayes's book is entitled "Chapters in the Psychology of Blindness," and contains essays on the work that has been done up to date on certain problems, with suggestions as to possible next steps. The second part is specially addressed to the teacher interested in the practice of intelligence testing, and attempts "to make readily accessible to teachers all that has been learned in approximately 25 years of testing"; directions for giving and interpreting tests that experience has shown to be successful are set out.

Dr. Hayes begins his book by examining some of the more foolish claims made by the unscientific admirer of the blind—claims which the blind themselves have repudiated over and over again, but which turn up with monotonous regularity in almost any uninformed conversation about blind people; they are so musical, they are so cheerful, they can detect differences of colour by means of touch, their hearing is so acute, and so on. In a chapter on Sensory Compensation an extremely interesting quotation is given showing the use of the sense of hearing by a blind man; it is taken from "The Unknown Folk" (unpublished) by Mr. S. C. Swift, of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Won't Mr. Swift give us an opportunity of reading the rest of so acute a piece of analysis by publishing the whole paper?

Dr. Hayes shows how the theory of sensory compensation fails to stand up to the test, and while readily admitting that the blind do surprising things with hearing, smell and touch, he claims that careful experiments have shown that their attainments are the result of long-continued practice rather than to superior sense discrimination. He discusses the often-debated "sense of obstacles," and gives special praise to the work of Dolanski in this connection, with its interesting suggestion that the sense of obstacles is a structural mechanism founded on the instinct of self-preservation and having hearing as its mainspring, but he considers that more experimental work is needed before any dogmatic

conclusion can be reached. An interesting chapter in this section deals with memory tests of blind children, and Dr. Hayes reaches the conclusion that in tests of logical memory (as contrasted with rote memory) there is some evidence that where there has been need for special attention blind children seem to have learned to make better use of their native abilities, though here, as in sensation, "compensation is not a gift but the reward of persistent effort."

The writer's conclusion in connection with the suggestion that schools for the blind to-day are getting poorer mental material than in the past is encouraging; he sees no evidence of this, and believes that because in the past only the exceptionally bright blind child was sought out and given his chance, whereas to-day every blind child is educated, there may be an apparent (though not real) lowering of the intellectual standard.

The chapter "Practical Hints for Testers" should, when intelligence testing is applied more widely in schools for the blind over here, be of value to teachers responsible for the testing, in spite of the fact that the English child and the material suitable for him must vary to some extent from the American child and his material.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Margins—and Some Marginalia.

SIR,—It is sad for you, your printers and your sighted readers, that your beloved margins have had to go. But here your blind readers, or rather eavesdroppers, have the advantage, for what the eye does not miss, the heart does not grieve for. It may be wondered how many of your readers used these margins, like Jones in Kipling's "Last Department," to "record his Minute of dissent or, may be, of approval"? What will they do now, poor things? And as for the higher Civil Servants, if they too are robbed of their margins!! The mind reels at the very idea!

But margins or no margins, you, Sir, possess a wonderful knack (or should I say "genius"?) for making your pages intensely interesting; and so you must take the blame for my burdening you with the following reflections after reading your October issue:

1. Consider the relation between the wonderful achievements of (a) Mr. K. W. Mason, as so modestly described in his fascinating article; (b) the mop-makers (page 156); (c) your note on the provision of apparatus; and (d) your list of Achievements of the Blind.

Taking first the brailled comptometer. Sighted but unimaginative friends often express surprise that the blind can use an ordinary typewriter, which is no wonder at all; but I confess, although I have used both the comptometer and other such machines in my sighted past and although I share Mr. Mason's dread of the Braille arithmetical system, I had never until now heard of the Braille calculating machine. Does not the idea open up tremendous vistas? Another fallacy exploded! Blindness now no bar to accountancy, and those horrid little bits of metal on cushions now only a nightmare.

2. Then you point out that lack of apparatus is due to shortage of labour. But have the employers thought of training blind people for some of the processes? I am so sick of hearing the sighted say "How could a blind person do—(this or that)?" A blind friend of mine, with B.A. and B.D. degrees, applied to a certain Bishop for Holy Orders and was met with ignorant amazement that he, being blind, could win such degrees at all!

3. This brings me to the conclusion that, at any rate after the war, something more ought to be attempted than has ever been done hitherto—even by the National Institute—to instruct the blind and the sighted as to the possibilities of the former. I suggest that we need to get these stories of the achievements of the blind into our ordinary papers. Is this possible? After all, *THE NEW BEACON* circulates chiefly among those who already know of them, and I fear items from its pages seldom or never reach the public eye. Was it not Gilbert who wrote:

"If you want in this world to advance,
Your merits you're bound to enhance;
You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance."

Would not this be a good motto for any liaison officer between the Blind and the Sighted Worlds?

Yours, etc.

GERARD E. FOX.

(Our correspondent will be pleased to learn that the achievements of the blind chronicled in this journal are often quoted in the newspaper press throughout the country. Mr. Mason's achievement, for example, attained leading news page status in a leading London daily.—EDITOR.)

To the Editor.

Home Teachers ; Talking Books.

SIR,—I have recently become a subscriber to *THE NEW BEACON*, though copies of same have come to me off and on for a number of years.

As I am considerably interested in the work

of the Home Teacher, I would very much welcome the publication of letters by Home Teachers. To my mind there is much to be gained through the knowledge of the experiences of those whose work takes them in close contact with the blind individual.

In your issue of July is a letter complaining of the manner in which the English Talking Book records are read. I entirely disagree with this statement, as I think the English-read books are every bit as well done as the American ones. Taking as an example "Farmer's Glory," by Street, we enjoy the country dialect which occurs in the story very much indeed, and it is well spoken, too.

Yours, etc.,

M. T. WATSON (Miss).

Rondebosch, South Africa.

To the Editor.

Christmas, 1941.

SIR,—CHRISTMAS! . . . In peace time it is the season of family re-union and good will to all. Even to-day most of us can look forward to seeing some dearly loved face and hearing some beloved voice. But not all—for there are many of our fellow-men whose lives are passed in impenetrable darkness and the solitude of silence. Not for them the light of God's sun nor the colour of the flowers. Not for them the song of the birds nor the ripple of running water. Surely in gratitude for our great gifts of sight and hearing we cannot do less than our best to brighten the lives of those who lack them. Please send us all you can spare to give some pleasure to these brave souls at this season of good will.

All donations will be acknowledged and should be sent to:—

The General Secretary

National Deaf-Blind Helpers' League,

40, Green Road,

Hall Green,

Birmingham, 28.

L. JOHNSON (Mrs.)

To the Editor.

Extra Retinal Vision.

SIR,—The power of detecting colours by touch has frequently been attributed to certain blind persons. In spite of the very natural scepticism which most reasonable people must feel towards such allegations, the fact remains that the authority of many of the recorded cases is such that they cannot lightly be dismissed. The researches of Paul Romains into this subject, and the fantastic results he achieved, are familiar to most people, but the fact is seldom recognised that if his results are accurate, then

a new function has been discovered which must undermine many of the fundamental ideas both of ophthalmology and psychology. I would like to know whether any of your readers claim to be able to "see" colours by touch. By this, of course, I do not mean the ability to separate, say, red from green raffia by reason of some different texture or scent. Most people can do that. What I would like to know is whether there is anybody who can distinguish two objects by reason only of a difference in colours.

Yours, etc.,

J. WILSON.

To the Editor,

The Problem of Blind Welfare.

SIR,—The suggestion put forward by A.F.K. for a Ministry of Blind Welfare under central control would have serious drawbacks.

- (1) It would add yet another government department to the existing numerous ministries.
- (2) The administration, as it concerned the blind person, would still be in the hands of the local officers all over the country whose interpretation of the instructions of the central body might be as diverse as the working of the various voluntary societies and local authorities is at present.
- (3) One more government department would be sending officers into the blind person's home. Overlapping would not in fact be obliterated.
- (4) The personal touch would be lost. A state official might tend to be just an official and the welfare side of the work would suffer in consequence.

The whole problem needs to be looked at, not from the very narrow view of the small proportion of the population who suffer from blindness, as though they were a race apart with their own Ministry, but from the far wider one which would visualise blind welfare as a part of the well organised social service of the country. The social service rendered to the blind, along with that rendered to the other classes of the handicapped, at present almost unprovided for, would be an integral part of a unified system of social service, not necessarily all under central control, but co-ordinated so as to abolish the overlapping between central government, local government and the voluntary bodies; and to remove the various well-known anomalies between the existing services. A Committee, under the Chairmanship of Sir William Beveridge, has been appointed to review the whole of the social services. It is to be hoped that some measure of unanimity between the social services will ultimately result.

One of the most disquieting things which became apparent at the recent conference was the narrowness in outlook of most of the home teachers. A much wider knowledge of all the existing social services, not only those relating to the blind, and the anomalies which exist between them, is needed. If home teachers were more familiar with all the social legislation, they would be less dogmatic, more tolerant of the existing anomalies and of greater service to the people whose welfare they have at heart.

Yours, etc.,

E. M. B.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

National Institute for the Blind.—Though we are sometimes guilty of envying the beautiful photographs that illustrate American reports, it is doubtful if any of these are more attractive than those given in this year's Report of the National Institute. How much more interesting it is to see blind men and women engaged in manifold activities than to see pictures of the Homes, however beautiful, in which they are accommodated!

First place is given in this year's Report to the Institute's three newly-opened Homes of Recovery for war-blinded civilians, including Long Meadow, Goring-on-Thames, the home of the Institute's Chairman, Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C.; America Lodge, Torquay, the generous gift of the British War Relief Society of the United States of America; and Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth. The Report comments also on the Institute's Homes of Rest for blind persons suffering as the result of enemy action, on its War Emergency Grants Fund, and its Fund for Societies for the Blind hampered by war conditions.

The normal activities of the Institute which have continued in spite of the war, include its three Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies, though unhappily the Home at Southport was destroyed by enemy action and members of the staff lost their lives; the children have been transferred to a house in Northumberland, generously placed by its owners at the Institute's disposal. Court Grange School, Chorleywood College, and Worcester College have been able to carry on, the Institute's Massage School has been unaffected (save that the war has spurred its students to greater efforts "to secure quick entry

into a profession which will enable them to render national service of first importance") and Braille production continues, both at headquarters and at premises acquired at Bourne-mouth, where blind transcribers work in the comparative safety denied during heavy raids on London. Here, too, the Manuscript Department is housed, and the Students' Library is able to carry on much of its work, including its censorship for the postal authorities of all Braille correspondence. The Talking Book Department has continued, though a bomb did havoc to the recording studio and production unit at St. Dunstan's; the department has received a further grant of £400 from the Pilgrim Trust. Personal services to the blind have naturally increased as a result of war needs, and the work of the Department has ranged from provision of professional training for the gifted young blind to the care of those overcome by illness or domestic difficulties of many kinds.

In the early pages of the Report regret is expressed for the severance of relations with organisations for the blind on the Continent, owing to wartime conditions; but as some offset to this, the final paragraph is able to record some among many of the kindnesses shown by America and Canada. In addition to the munificent gift of the Home at Torquay by the British War Relief Society of the United States, there has been a gift of Talking Book needles by the American Foundation for the Blind, a donation of £60 from the American readers of "Readers' Digest" for the war-blinded, and an offer from the Montreal Association to take blind children should they have to be evacuated from Britain. Such generosity should give us good heart for the future.

College of Teachers of the Blind.—The Report of the College states that the war has been responsible for two unfortunate effects on the year's work—a falling off of membership (which it is hoped is only temporary) and a cessation of the meetings of the General Executive, owing to difficulties of travel. Routine work has been carried on by means of correspondence. The death has taken place during the past year of two valued members of the College, in Mr. Pearson, formerly a member of the Executive and a member of the first Board of Examiners, and in Miss L. O. Burges, Chairman of the Northern Branch in 1938-39, and a member of the College Executive at the time of her death. A plea is made to members to give greater help to Miss Cramp, Editor of "The Teacher of the Blind," now that, owing to the infrequency of meetings the magazine is one of the few links that can bind members together.

Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind.—This Association has had its work seriously impeded during the year by enemy action, causing a stoppage of work in the basket, brush, soap and retail departments. The West Ham Borough Council gave workshop accommodation to some of the brush-makers; a few of the basket-makers and netters could be employed at home; and the National Institute for the Blind has provided for the office staff. Best of all, perhaps, the Bedfordshire County Council hopes to give workshop facilities at their County Workshops at Luton, and at the time of the publication of the Report plans were going ahead for this. Sales have naturally suffered severely, and in addition to the headquarters of the Association, other property owned has been seriously damaged. It is good, however, to read that in spite of the present difficult times friends of the Association have rallied to its support, and the Report ends with the cheerful note that "thus encouraged, we look forward to happier days."

Royal Leicester Institution.—Pictures in the Annual Report, which used to be a specially interesting feature of the year's record, are now severely rationed, and the only illustration is one showing a blind home teacher with her guide dog, Lorna, who "has become as acceptable a visitor as her mistress." The organiser of the Appeals Department of the Institution gives an interesting account of his department's activities, which have now been carried on for twenty-one years. In that time the funds have increased by over 400 per cent., and one form of giving which was in operation before the period began—workpeople's contributions—has grown by £830 per annum. That subscriptions have only increased by £100 is, in comparison, rather disappointing. Money-raising is often a thankless task, and always a difficult one, and the department is to be congratulated on what it has achieved.

Greater London Fund for the Blind.—In spite of wartime difficulties, the Report is able to give details of a wide range of money-raising activities, including the usual Geranium Day collection, when £7,770 was allotted to the Fund; the Annual Sisterhood Meeting; a meeting held in the Armitage Hall of students from London Secretarial Colleges; a garden party in the grounds of Caen Wood Towers; and a luncheon given to 300 British seamen through the generosity of Lord Nuffield. At this luncheon Lord Nuffield stated his intention to give £10,000 to Sir Beachcroft Towse to enable him to provide for the welfare of civilians blinded by enemy action. The Report pays a special tribute to

the work of its blind organisers and house-to-house collectors for the way in which they have carried on in spite of black-out and devastation caused by enemy action.

Empire

South African National Council for the Blind.—The Council was founded in 1929 to co-ordinate the work of societies for the blind throughout the Union, and issues its Reports biennially. In the present Report, for 1939 and 1940, it is interesting to see that its revenue has increased from £1,777 to £5,422, including a Government grant that, starting at £150 per annum is now £500 per annum. Grants paid to constituent bodies have in the two years under review amounted to £8,723, and since the Council was founded £30,868 has been distributed. There are now over 18,000 registered blind persons in the Union, and the matter of causation receives careful attention, though the appointment of a full-time officer in charge of a department dealing solely with prevention has not proved possible, owing to the war. Such a department has, however, begun to function under the direction of the Organising Secretary of the Council. The Report includes a tribute by the Chairman, Mr. R. W. Bowen, M.P., to the work of Mr. J. J. Prescott-Smith, Organising Secretary of the Council since its inception, who has recently resigned, and who is now General Manager of the Cape Town Civilian Blind Society. "His generous heart, his extensive experience and his organising ability" have been invaluable. "He has," to quote Mr. Bowen, "made the Council what it is."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music are in accordance with a revised schedule of prices for Braille music. They represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production, and are applicable to customers throughout the world.

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18506	Charles, H., and Miller, S. What's at the Top of a Sunbeam? <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
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Forthcoming Panda.

No. 48. Bomber Command. 2 vols. 1s. net the set. The Air Ministry account of Bomber Command's Offensive against the Axis, from September, 1939, to July, 1941. The vivid and enthralling story includes the Leaflet Raids, the Battles of Norway and Flanders, Mining, the Attack on the Invasion Ports, the Battle of the Atlantic, the Raids on Germany, etc.

PLEASE NOTE.

The number of Braille Pandas printed is strictly limited, and the majority is absorbed by annual subscribers to all Pandas issued. There is consequently only a very small number of copies available for casual customers.

MOON BOOKS.

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31st October, 1941.

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Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington ..	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	—
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington ..	—
Wavertree House, Hove	—
The Haven, Scarborough	—
Bannow, St. Leonards	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
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HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1942.

Qualified Home Teacher, with many successes to his credit concerning past Examinations, continues to offer comprehensive postal tuition in Braille and Professional Knowledge; also helpful guidance respecting the service as a whole. Apply (enclosing stamp) to: H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind:
Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age. Exceptions to this rule may be made during the war.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

BRISTOL ROYAL BLIND ASYLUM.

Appointment of Home Teacher.

Applications are invited for the post of sighted certificated Home Teacher. Commencing salary £156 per annum rising to £208, plus increase cost of living allowance. Permanent appointment for suitable applicant. Commence as soon as possible after 1st January (earlier if possible). Superannuation scheme. Apply, stating age, qualifications, experience, etc., enclosing copies of three recent testimonials, not later than 30th November, 1941, to the General Superintendent, Workshops for the Blind, St. George's Road, Bristol, 1.

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Appointment of Home Teacher for the Blind.

The Council invite applications from women (sighted) for the above appointment. The person appointed will be on the staff of the County Medical Officer, and will be required to pass a medical examination and to contribute to the Superannuation Scheme. Travelling expenses on the County Scale will be paid if the person appointed provides her own car; but the Council will be prepared to provide and maintain a car, if necessary. Salary £150 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £200 per annum, plus cost-of-living bonus and travelling allowance according to scales. The commencing salary may be varied according to experience.

Applications stating age, qualifications and experience to be sent to the County Medical Officer, County Offices, Hereford, on or before the 25th November, 1941.

CITY OF SALFORD.

Two Home Teachers and Visitors of blind persons required (female). Salary scale £117 to £169 per annum (commencing salary if certificated £156 per annum) plus war bonus, at present ten per cent. Uniform clothing provided.

The persons selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to their inclusion in the Superannuation Scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, experience and qualifications, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the Executive Officer, Blind Persons Welfare Department, 49, Crescent, Salford, 5, not later than Tuesday, 2nd December, 1941.

H. H. TOMSON,
Town Clerk.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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HELP: A DISCUSSION

By LAURENCE R. WATSON

"IT'S no use," my imaginary visitor declared with some emphasis, "you can't generalise." I registered impatience.

"You've said that before," I reminded him. "And anyway why not generalise? Not to do so on occasion betrays an intellectual timidity, a craven fear of being proved wrong. Our question is straightforward enough. Apart from financial help, what kind of assistance is wanted by the average intelligent blind man or woman?"

"But," he argued, "it isn't as simple as that. In the first place what do you mean by average blind man or woman? And in the second, why should you or anyone else assume that all blind people want the same things or even such a limited number of different things that they can be grouped in convenient categories? It depends on individual circumstances, and even with any given individual his circumstances are liable to variation and so his needs will vary."

"Even so," I urged, "we can still attempt to classify the kinds of help most in demand. To begin with: surely you agree that there is a pressing desire among the adult blind to be given the opportunity of earning a living at some job or in some position where their particular abilities can be brought into full play and where they can achieve the dignity rooted in a consciousness of useful service."

My friend indicated dissent, which I ignored and continued:

"So research which will bring such jobs to light and training which will qualify people to fill them must be forms of assistance in pretty general demand. And what about education? To prepare blind children to take their places in the world, equipped, if possible, with some compensatory awareness to minimise the effects of their disability is obviously a vital requirement."

This time I could not with any semblance of politeness evade his manifest desire to interrupt.

"There you are," he exclaimed, "this generalising swamps real issues, makes you sound like a rather dull interim report. Let's forget about education for the moment. I don't suppose many healthy children, blind or not, actually *want* education or compensatory awareness (whatever that is). Of course, I agree that many people want jobs. I also agree that the best way to help them is to find the jobs. But, mind, as you suggest, the jobs must be worth doing; not ludicrous or valueless contrivings for passing the time uncomfortably in exchange for exiguous remuneration. The work must be such that it inspires real pride in the doing, or at least satisfaction. And the pay must be at least adequate."

"But many blind people don't want jobs, are not in a position or environment where the question arises. Take a hypothetical case. Mrs. Smith is blind and lives virtually alone in a suburb of London. She is 65 or thereabouts. Does she of necessity want a job? Probably she doesn't. The only way to find what assistance will benefit her is to ask her. Maybe more chance to talk, chatter, gossip (call it what you like) is her most pressing need. No"—seeing me on the verge of protest—"I'm not being facetious. The frustrated desire to talk is a genuine form of suffering. Loneliness can be a hideous thing and very many blind folk are lonely.

"On the other hand, Mr. Brown, also getting on in years, may have plenty of company. His deprivation is want of access to newspapers. He may have been able to see once, and considered a day ill-spent on which he didn't read three or four leaders and half-a-dozen special reports. For him someone who would intelligently read the papers aloud, keeping the characteristics of each journal well in the foreground, and not monotonously wading through news items he heard broadcast last night, might be a godsend."

I murmured that visiting was, I thought, one of the functions of the home-teaching service and that there were periodicals in Braille.

My visitor was scornful.

"If," he replied, "our old lady is only normally chatty by temperament an occasional visit from a home teacher will act merely like an *apéritif* when there is no meal to follow; her verbal appetite will be stimulated and then denied sustenance. And as for Braille periodicals: to Mr. Brown they will probably appear as belated and arbitrarily selected news summaries and a collection of slightly ponderous or (worse still) 'bright' articles chosen from out-of-date letterpress magazines because, presumably, they can harm no one and may interest someone. If he is the sort of reader who, in the ordinary way, would see, say, two morning and one evening paper daily and a couple of reviews at the week-end, Braille publications plus the wireless news will leave him in a state of journalistic famine.

"Besides, I'm not saying what services do or do not exist to benefit the blind, nor criticising those that do exist except in so far as what they can offer falls short of Mrs. Smith's and Mr. Brown's needs. I am simply illustrating that even with two individuals for whom quite ordinary desires are postulated, spacious talk about blind people's needs in general terms is likely to be utterly unrealistic."

I said: "But from these two instances definite lines that assistance should take can be formulated. Much more visiting and the making available of a wider range of news—while it still is news—and comment. What about a daily paper issued in Braille, provided, which is doubtful, that a large enough circulation could be guaranteed?"

My friend, somewhat reluctantly, admitted this. "But," he insisted, "so many general theories of help are based on insufficient data. There may be a number of blind people in Mrs. Smith's or Mr. Brown's position; but neither of them is typical, because, in my opinion, there are no typical blind. Blindness isn't a vocation. It's a handicap, afflicting people at different ages and affecting them in different ways and to variable degrees. Let's consider another imaginary example."

"Must we?" I asked.

My visitor insisted that we must and went on to outline the case of a young blind man, fairly well-off, married and living in the country. This young man knew next to nothing about blind welfare work. He was registered, but beyond that had no contacts with blind organisations. His life was passed mainly out-of-doors. He bred chickens, did a certain amount of carpentry and assisted in the working of a small-holding. What help, my friend demanded, would he most need?

I said that on the face of it he didn't seem to need any.

"That," I was told, "is where you are wrong. You say that because he falls outside the convenient classifications into which blind people are expected to fall. What he wants are tools and gadgets so adapted that they can be manipulated by a sightless man. He has no concern with talking books or discussions about the use of the italic-sign. But anyone who made available some device enabling him to perform some part of his daily work with more freedom, accuracy or comfort would be rendering him, as a blind man, a real and practical service."

I suggested that here again a generalisation would help since what in this case was required was a development of technical research (of which quite a lot was being done) with special reference to the needs of blind people engaged on rural jobs.

My visitor said, after a pause: "Well, of course, if you are prepared to base your list of classified methods of assistance on ascertained individual needs, keeping the classification sufficiently elastic, you may arrive eventually at a catalogue that will embrace a fair selection of such needs. What should be aimed for is

the sort of help that gives every individual the chance to lead a richer and fuller life and minimises the difficulties arising from a lack of sight."

"Who is generalising now?" I asked. "But if I understand you aright your contention is that in this question of assistance blind people

must be considered as separate individuals and not as a segment of the population with more or less identical needs because suffering under an identical disability?"

He thought that perhaps I had grasped his meaning, and so we left it.

HOME NEWS

National Health Insurance and Means Assessment.—On 23rd October, in the House of Commons, Mr. Messer asked the Minister of Health whether he would draw the attention of scheme-making authorities to the provisions of the law allowing for the disregard of National Health Insurance benefit for the first three months in any year in the assessment of means of blind persons.

In reply, Mr. Brown said that in a circular issued to local authorities in March, 1938, attention was drawn to the requirement that, in computing the resources of a blind person applying for financial assistance, the first 7s. 6d. a week of any National Health Insurance benefit is to be disregarded. He proposed to issue a further circular drawing attention to the fact that in January next this amount will be increased to 10s. 6d. under the recent Insurance Act.

Wakefield Institution.—The address of the Wakefield District Institution for the Blind is now 29, Peterson Road, Wakefield. The Secretary is Mr. J. L. Simpson, and the Hon. Treasurer Mr. R. H. Colson.

Dundee Blind Players help Russia.—Last month the Amateur Dramatic Society and the Royal Dundee Institution for the Blind performed for the first time on a stage other than that at the institution. The blind players appeared in "Auld Nic," a musical comedy by Andrew P. Wilson, at the Good Templar Hall, Broughton Ferry, in aid of Help for Russia.

Meeting of Northern Counties Employing Authorities.—On November 27th a Meeting of Representatives of Employing Authorities and Agencies in the area covered by the Northern Counties Association for the Blind was held in Leeds to consider the setting up of the employers' side of the Joint Industrial Advisory Committee. The Chairman, Councillor Clydesdale, reminded those present that their purpose was not to discuss the setting up of a Joint Industrial Advisory Committee, as this had already been

decided upon, but to discuss an endeavour to arrive at a satisfactory method of electing representatives to the employers' side.

After discussion the scheme of representation adopted—based on geographical distribution of authorities and workshops—provided for ten representatives to be elected by the Local Authorities and seven by the Workshop Managements, each in three groups. Nomination and election would be carried out by postal ballot. The Secretary of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind was authorised to proceed.

Urgent Need for Apparatus.—There is an urgent need for several pieces of apparatus used by the blind, and owing to the increasing difficulties of getting new machines manufactured, the National Institute for the Blind is trying to obtain as many second-hand machines as possible. Improved Stainsby Braille Writing Machines and Braille Shorthand Machines, both with or without cases, are especially needed, mainly for the use of war-blinded people now undergoing training, and an earnest appeal is made to all readers of this journal either to give or to sell to the Institute machines not now in use. If they do not possess machines themselves, they may know of infrequently used machines in the possession of blind friends who might be willing to part with them if their attention is drawn to the urgent need.

There is a similar need for Braille Watches, expressed by the National Institute in an announcement on page 212 of this issue.

Worcester College Master's Adventure.—Pilot Officer Keith Southam was, until the outbreak of war, the classical master at Worcester College for the Blind. He has recently had a thrilling adventure. Forced down at sea, he and his companions escaped by rubber dinghy. They were eventually spotted by aircraft and picked up by a ship which landed them at a west-coast port. After several weeks without news, Mr. and Mrs. Southam have just received a letter from their son relating this adventure.

FOREIGN NEWS

A New Script Writing Appliance.—Sir Clutha Mackenzie has sent the National Institute for the Blind a script writing appliance invented by Miss Elizabeth Helm, of Pittsburgh, U.S.A., for her mother who went blind many years ago. With this frame Miss Helm's mother was able to correspond with friends in the U.S.A. and England, and also to write short stories.

The frame is in the form of a loose-leaf binder. On one side of the cover are mounted strips of presspahn which overlap each other; these act as guide lines when the paper to be written on is clipped in position over the presspahn. On the other side of the cover provision is made for keeping loose papers, envelopes, etc. A pencil is attached to one of the rings of the binder by means of a chain. A supply of loose paper is included in the compendium.

The Story of the Dog, the Snake and the Blind Man.—A blind man at Coalinga in California was very bewildered the other day when his dog refused to let him go into the garage, blocking the entrance and barking furiously. Mr. McHenry poked his cane into the garage and was horrified to feel the sudden impact of something against it, and to hear the whirring of a rattlesnake. Jumping back, he slammed the door and called for help, and a neighbour came running with a gun and shot two big rattlesnakes coiled up inside. The dog, alert to the danger, had saved his master's life.

Work of Blinded Soldiers in Germany.—According to an article in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, there are still about 3,600 soldiers, who were blinded in the last war, living in the Reich. 2,800 of them are working indefatigably at the side of the other workers and take their part in the national struggle. They are acting as advanced teachers, educators, Civil Servants of the State and municipality, businessmen, telephonists, masseurs, industrial and agricultural workers, independent producers of brushes, mats, pegs, etc. In all cases their work is said to be of the highest standard and of almost the same value as that of sighted workers.

Now that the State, trade and the Army are producing the conditions for an appropriate occupation as well as one that agrees with their inclination, their capacity for work and their efficiency have proved amazing.

A blind masseur gives 32 to 36 treatments to men in a hospital—an accomplishment far

beyond the average for which he was decorated with the War Merit Medal. War-blind farmers do forms of agricultural work for which eyesight is not particularly needed. In certain industries the blind, with the aid of ingeniously constructed means, have been enabled to carry the full weight of the general effort. The extremely well developed sense of hearing and feeling predestines the blind to perform a certain class of task.

Thus in a watch factory a war-blinded worker has to control the regularity of movement on the watches coming out of the works. He does so in an especially constructed cabin which is connected with the mounting room by a little lift. On his table is a writing machine on which he can, by typing, convey his observations right through the workshop. Another is putting the little parts of a watch together: they are lying before him, on his table, in a certain sequence.

Fifty Thousand Children in U.S.A. Need Sight-Saving Classes.—Approximately 50,000 school children in the United States have such seriously defective vision as to require the special facilities and special teaching methods used in "sight-saving classes," in order that they may take the fullest advantage of the educational programme and, at the same time, conserve their remaining sight, according to Mrs. Winifred Hathaway, Associate Director of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, outstanding authority on the education of partially seeing children.

"Fortunately," said Mrs. Hathaway, "such classes are now maintained in more than 200 cities and towns in 28 States, the District of Columbia and Hawaii, with a total enrolment of about 9,000 boys and girls; but there are still about 41,000 children who need these special educational facilities.

"These classes are in the regular schools, so that the children are not segregated from their normally seeing companions. They do all their close eye work in a specially equipped classroom under the direction of a teacher who is trained to understand their eye conditions, and they take all other work in the regular classrooms.

"In sight-saving classes the books are in large, clear type; maps and pictures have a definite, heavy outline and few details; and special paper and pencils suitable for the use of

these children are provided. Typewriters with large type are an essential part of the equipment, and the pupils are taught the touch system of typewriting so that as soon as possible they may substitute typewriting for handwriting and thus save much close eye use."

Japs Use the Blind.—Japan is using every available man in its mobilisation of labour, including the blind.

The School for the Blind and Dumb at Okayama are sending blind experts about the countryside giving free massage to tired farmers.

EDINBURGH BLIND BOYS GO HIKING

COL. R. B. CAMPBELL, C.B.E., D.S.O., Director of the Pollock Institute of Physical Education, accompanied by Mr. Houston, Chief Instructor, arranged a hike for blind boys of the Royal School for the Blind, Edinburgh, one Sunday in mid-June, as the culmination of a course of physical training which had been carried out through the winter.

The party started early on a fresh bright afternoon, taking the bus to a point about ten miles from the city, on the edge of moorland and close to two reservoirs on the shores of which is plenty of bird-life. From their starting-point they walked two miles to the nearer of the reservoirs, keeping quiet, and listening intently for the sounds of bird-life. As they went, they felt the texture of tree trunks and passed round specimens of leaves. Arriving at the reservoir, a system of signs was arranged, one whistle signifying "Halt!", another "Come!" and a third "Come quickly—urgent!" The party then set off in pairs (a sighted or partially sighted boy with a blind one) and scattered, walking across open country to a sheltered bank along a stream,

half-hidden in heather and bog myrtle, and listening as they went for the sound of larks, plovers, curlews and other birds, including the "little bread and no chee-e-ese" of the yellow hammer, happily recalled from a ramble of the previous year.

Even the meal that followed was an adventure, for the eggs that were eaten were hidden in a nest copied from that of a grouse, and the boys had to find it. Then came a walk to the second reservoir and here a curlew's nest with four eggs was found (last year it had been a tufted duck's with 12 eggs) and a large frog eagerly handled. The walk back to the road was enriched by the finding of many flowers in the marshy ground, and the hearing of more birds—first those of the moors and then the willow warblers, chaffinches and others belonging to the woodlands. And so home.

"Instead of one hike there should have been a series of them, one every Sunday during May and June, and then, to finish up with, a week's camp in July." We feel sure that all the boys who took part would endorse this comment.



A HAPPY GROUP OF THE BLIND BOYS AT THE PICNIC SITE.

WHAT OF THE BLIND?

IN 1938 the American Foundation for the Blind published a book bearing the above title and edited by Miss Helga Lende, the Foundation's Librarian. It was intended to meet "a long-felt need for a convenient reference work . . . The subjects treated were mainly of a general nature." A companion volume, *What of the Blind?* (Vol. 2), price two dollars, has now been brought out by the Foundation, to cover problems of a specific nature, and to present a picture "of recent advances and developments." Once more it is edited by Miss Lende, and its contributors include many well-known workers for the blind in the United States, whose names are also familiar to English readers. The contents are divided under five main sections as follows:—

1. Interpretation of blindness.
2. Special educational problems, comprising chapters on intelligence testing, the education of the gifted, physically defective, mentally retarded and deaf-blind child; and on aids and appliances in education.
3. Economic and vocational adjustment, with reference to problems of employment, placement, the sheltered workshop, the home worker and the pastime worker, the dog-guide movement.
4. Personal adjustment of the adult blind, with special reference to case work and home teaching.
5. Statistics of blindness.
6. Federal government and the blind.

The opening chapter of the book, entitled "This Business of Being Blind," by C. Magee Adams, who lost his sight in boyhood, forms an admirable introduction. It does not contain anything that is startlingly new, but it puts the things that unite the blind man to the seeing, and the things that form a barrier between them, simply and convincingly. Needless to say, Mr. Adams has no use for any "sixth sense" claims, nor for such facile generalisations as those which claim that the blind are musical or that they are "always so cheerful," but he equally does not pretend that the loss of so important a sense as that of sight can occur without important and lasting emotional results. He recognises, too, that of all the problems created by blindness, the most stubborn is the economic. "There is," he says quite bluntly, "no occupation where the sightless can compete on equal terms with the seeing." Of course, modern appliances have done much to mitigate the

handicap, and Mr. Adams gives them due credit. But when all is said and done, the blind man is desperately handicapped, and it is folly to suggest that anything can make up to him for sight; his dependence upon others, to take only one example, is something that can never be wholly overcome. "If the sightless can do a thing at all it takes longer or costs more effort," and in fairness to the blind the seeing should never overlook this hard fact.

In "The Blind Child and his World," Dr. Lowenfeld, a Viennese psychologist and worker for the blind until the early nineteen-thirties, and now a member of the staff of the American Foundation, discusses the child whose blindness is total and who has no visual memory. He emphasises the importance of giving him as much real experience as possible, in order that he may be protected from the dangers of verbalism and also from that of escape into fantasy life. He deals with the difficulties that arise from the fact that the blind child without visual memory is taught side by side with the partially seeing whose mental world is so widely different. In an interesting part of his essay he treats of the education of blind children in schools for the seeing, and quotes a statement by Dr. Edward Allen, of Perkins Institution, to the effect that if he were starting his educational work to-day he "should conduct no senior high school department, but would send every proper pupil of that advancement out daily for such opportunities."

The chapter by Dr. Samuel Hayes, dealing with mental measurements of the blind, is evidence of the systematic routine intelligence testing in American schools which began a quarter of a century ago, and has now been used for over 3,000 children. We are accustomed to the idea of a blind child's two years' retardation, but the conclusion of Dr. Hayes that the Binet tests indicate a retardation of four years when blind children are fourteen, and a still greater retardation in the late 'teens is rather surprising.

Miss Mayshark, head of the Department of Special Education at Perkins, is responsible for a chapter on the gifted, retarded and physically defective blind child. With regard to the gifted child, she is of opinion that if possible he should attend a school for the seeing, where competition is keener than in the school for the blind and where he can show by personal example that a blind child may lead a normal and happy life in a seeing world; she stresses the importance for the retarded child of special classes where he may progress to the full extent of ability, and

at his own pace. It is desirable that such children should learn to read, that they should correlate the teachings of history, geography and literature to the happenings of to-day, that they should not be over-taxed with arithmetic, and that they should be encouraged to take a lively interest in natural things about them; in this connection, she writes of a boy who rushed into the classroom one February morning with the eager words on his lips, "Good news. I heard a song sparrow this morning."

Dr. Farrell contributes a chapter on the education of the deaf-blind, specially stressing the pioneer part that Perkins Institution has played in this connection, from the time that little Laura Bridgman entered its doors more than a hundred years ago, and giving an interesting account of the deaf-blind children for whom Perkins cares to-day.

Dr. French and Dr. Morgan conclude the educational section of the book with a chapter on appliances in schools for the blind, with special reference to those in use in the school in California of which Dr. French is Superintendent and Dr. Morgan Teaching Principal.

In the third section, Milton Klein, a psychiatrist, in a chapter entitled "Individualised Approach to the Problems of Blindness," criticises the residential school on the ground that it takes the child away from his family, and deprives him of early competition with his seeing fellows, thus postponing for him that adjustment to living in a seeing world that must eventually be faced.

In the two following chapters the blind are regarded from the standpoint of the general case-worker and an account is given of home teaching in the state of Washington, where it was only inaugurated four years ago. There are in the state about 2,000 blind persons, of whom about 1,200 are over sixty, so that the four home teachers, in an area considerably greater than England and Wales, must have their hands full!

Col. Baker, of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, contributes a chapter on employment, and claims that a comprehensive scheme demands co-ordination among blind agencies, complete registration, reasonably good financial support, efficient administration and unceasing contact with "the changing picture of society, industry and business." C. L. Broun, of the New York Bureau of Services for the Blind, writes of the work of a placement officer, his approach to the employer, contact with the blind seeking work, and continuous supervision of the worker after employment has been found. Peter Salmon, a blind man, then deals with the blind who for various reasons cannot compete in the open labour market, and must work in

sheltered workshops, in their own homes or even as pastime workers. Mention is made of the Wagner O'Day Act (1937) providing that brooms and mops made by the blind might be purchased by the Federal Government, and of the National Industries for the Blind (a department of the American Foundation) which co-operates with workshops for the blind in the manufacture and sale of their products.

In her chapter on Statistics of Blindness, Miss Evelyn McKay begins with the frank confession that there are no reliable statistics in the United States on the extent of blindness or characteristics of the blind population. She dismisses census figures as unreliable, and says that those of the Social Security Board, though undoubtedly of limited value, are certainly incomplete. She pays a tribute to the completer figures that exist in England and to our recent stress on the importance of ophthalmological examination, goes on to point out the relevance of complete and accurate statistical records in relation to the education of the young, the employment of the able-bodied adult and the care of the elderly and unemployable, and sets out some steps which should be taken in the interests of better statistics.

In the last section of the book, Miss Hoey, of the Bureau of Social Assistance in Washington, shows how the Social Security Act of 1935 assisted the blind through its insurance programmes, its health and welfare services, and its schemes for the relief of the aged; and Mr. Robert Irwin, Executive Director of the American Foundation, contributes a chapter dealing at some length with the federal provisions that have been made for the benefit of the blind, touching on the Pratt-Smoot Law, the Wagner O'Day Act and the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

Such is a rather cursory survey of the contents of *What of the Blind?* It is a book that should be of considerable interest to the English reader, and one that should also be of encouragement; for so much that it says is applicable to our own problems as well as those of the worker for the blind in America, and on the whole the solutions that are offered are on similar lines.

PERSONALIA

Councillor ERNEST KESSELL, C.B.E., was honoured early this month at Nottingham by a presentation and a luncheon, given by the Lord Mayor, to mark his completion of 50 years' service with Pearson's Fresh Air Fund, of which he has been Hon. Secretary since its inception. He was Treasurer of St. Dunstan's from 1915

to 1932, and has been a member of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund Committee since 1929. He is a councillor of Kingston-upon-Thames.

* * *

Last month Mr. and Mrs. ALBERT REEVES, of 78 North End Grove, Portsmouth, both of whom are blind, and aged 79 and 70 years respectively, celebrated their golden wedding. They have had 14 children, 18 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

* * *

At a recent meeting of the Board of Governors of Worcester College for the Blind, the Governors, on the proposal of Mr. T. H. Tylor, unanimously expressed their cordial good wishes to the Chairman, LORD COBHAM, on his 60th birthday, and desired that the gratitude of the Governors for the many services which he and his father had rendered to the College over a period of many years should be placed on record.

* * *

At a recent meeting of the Council of the Association of Certificated Blind Masseurs, Mr. P. L. WAY, C.S.M.M.G., B.P.A., F.R.C.O., was elected Chairman, and Mr. B. E. BENDIXSON, C.S.M.M.G., B.P.A., Vice-Chairman.

* * *

Mr. F. WHITTLE, who is blind, is to be ordained Deacon during Advent, and will act as third curate at St. Matthew's Church, Northampton. An anonymous friend offered to defray the stipend for three years for a third curate provided the position was filled by a blind man. Mr. Whittle took his B.A. at Oxford and is now at Cuddesdon Theological College.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

A Ministry of Blind Welfare.

SIR,—May I reply to E. M. B. ?

(1) Two important benefits resulting from centralisation would be (a) similar scales of domiciliary assistance throughout the country, and (b) more money for other forms of assistance. A Ministry of Blind Welfare already exists in part as a Department of the Ministry of Health, but a count taken of other bodies functioning in London alone, reveals dilution of effort and waste of money in rents, clerical staff and general items. No business concern could survive the overlapping and large overhead expenses used to dispense public money.

(2) State officials need not be inferior beings. In many congested areas there are officials giving a valuable personal touch to their work.

I suggest that Home Visitors will remain unchanged in character, whether they receive a suitable standard wage from the State, or £117—£150 from a local body, although it might well affect their educational standards—and physical stamina! Even if officialdom tended to appoint in favour of efficiency rather than kindness, I believe blind welfare will continue to attract only those people with a genuine love of service.

(3) The queries raised at the Conference deserved a more generous interpretation. As a sympathetic listener I thought the overflow of small matter indicated mental loneliness in the Home Visitor and the need for them to come to the discussion table more often. The small percentage voicing opinions may be imperfect in their initial attempts at public theorising, but they are seeking knowledge. Encourage them, and bewail the silence of complacency. Many are rightly intolerant of present inequalities, but they are neither narrow-minded nor dogmatic. Complete silence indicates stagnation, and it is useful to remember that Home Visitors are the arteries between the blind person and authority. Many Home Visitors are fully aware of other forms of social service, and would welcome co-ordination. Meanwhile, they try to become specialists in their own particular branch.

Yours, etc.,

A. K.

To the Editor.

The Billeting Allowance.

SIR,—I wonder if you could help me with the following :

A woman evacuates from an evacuating area into a safe area. She, quite naturally, claims the 5s. billeting allowance which is, when granted, paid to whomever she is lodging with.

She then applies to the local Blind Welfare Department for domiciliary assistance, which is granted. In assessing her income, however, the 5s. billeting allowance has been taken into account as her income.

Is this, please, correct? I think many people would like something in black and white from the Ministry on this point.

Yours, etc.,

HOME TEACHER.

[The billeting allowance is intended to reduce the personal expenses of those taking up residence in reception areas. It is part of the normal income of the person taking up such residence, and is usually taken into account by the Local Authority providing financial assistance. It is true, however, that many Local Authorities, because of the additional expenses to which blind persons are put, disregard the billeting allowance in calculating means, and provide the full amount of grant which is ordinarily available.—EDITOR.]

CONTRACT WHIST

By A BLIND CONTRIBUTOR.

WHIST is a popular card game with the blind, but Contract Bridge, now so popular with the sighted, presents difficulties to the blind owing to the dummy hand being exposed on the table. Some years ago Mr. Hubert Phillips published a book entitled "Contract Whist" (Faber & Faber, Ltd.) and I have found this game affords most of the advantages of Contract Bridge and is quite playable by the blind. Contract Whist differs from Contract Bridge chiefly in eliminating the chance gambling elements such as giving high scoring points for 4 Aces, 4 Honours, Slams, etc., and also by the elimination of the dummy hand. In Contract Bridge the partner of the player who makes the final bid has to lay his hand on the table, but in Contract Whist each player plays his own hand just as in Ordinary Whist. Mr. Phillips' book is now out of print, but he has kindly allowed me to explain the features of the game for the benefit of readers of THE NEW BEACON. I may state that I played Contract Bridge for years with my sighted friends who could tell me what were the cards in the dummy hand laid on the table. A year or two ago I started Contract Whist, and both my sighted friends and I find it quite as interesting a game as Contract Bridge, and it has the advantage that the blind member of the party is not handicapped by having to remember the cards in the exposed hand on the table.

Contract Whist differs from Ordinary Whist chiefly because the players can choose which suit will be Trumps, and this makes it a livelier game.

The different suits rank in the following order: Clubs is lowest, then Diamonds, then Hearts, then Spades and lastly, No Trumps.

The dealer bids first. If he bids "One Diamond" this means that he contracts to take one trick in Diamonds (one trick above the 6 Tricks necessary to make a book as in Whist). The player on the dealer's left hand may say "One Heart" and as Hearts rank higher than Diamonds his bid stands. The dealer's partner may say "One Spade" and the dealer's right-hand opponent may say "One No Trumps." The dealer may then raise the bid to "2 Diamonds" and each player is free to raise the bid according to his judgment of the value of his hand. The bidder making the highest bid in the highest ranking suit holds the position of dealer, and the player on his left hand plays the first card.

The scoring in Contract Whist is more elaborate than in ordinary Whist. The side which first makes 10 points below the line wins the game and two games make a rubber. The scoring is as follows:—

	Points.
Each trick in a suit over 6 ..	3
Each trick in No TRUMPS over 6 ..	4

These points are scored below a line and they alone count towards making the 10 points necessary for game.

In addition the following scores are made above the line:—

	Points.
For each trick above contract ..	2
For each trick LESS than contract the opponents score	10
For winning the rubber game ..	50

If one side thinks the other side have bid too high either of the players may say "Double." In this event if the bidder loses, the penalty is doubled, but if he makes his contract his score below the line is doubled.

Here are a few hints in regard to the declaration of Trumps:—

(1) 2 Aces and 1 King are the minimum necessary to allow one to declare. For example: if a player has Ace, King, and 3 small cards in Clubs and Ace of Hearts he is entitled to declare "One Club." Perhaps his partner will have a good suit of Spades and he will be entitled to declare "One Spade." The bidder of Clubs will then have to choose between saying "Two Clubs" or perhaps "Two Spades" if he has got support in Spades.

(2) After a suit has been bid the bidder's partner is entitled to bid 2 of the same suit provided he has 3 of the suit with an honour, or 4 without an honour, and at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ honour tricks in his hand ($1\frac{1}{2}$ winning tricks).

(3) The opposition players to the original bidders bid against him according to the value of their cards. One side may have strong Clubs and Diamonds and the other side strong Hearts and Spades in which case they will bid against each other according to the value of their hands.

(4) No Trumps should only be bid when a 3-3-3-4 hand is held or very occasionally 3-2-4-4 and the bidders should have one or two top honours in at least 3 suits. For example: a player with Ace of Clubs, Ace of Spades, Ace,

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

A Tract for the Times.

Christian Citizenship, by A. K. Turner (obtainable from the National Institute for the Blind, price 6d.), is the testament of a business man, for whom Christianity was a way of life and not merely a creed. Obligated to retire from professional life some years ago on account of blindness, he was one of those "who going through the vale of misery use it for a well," and he found in the handicap which cut short his business career an incentive to social service. Soon after blindness overtook him, he founded the Boston and Holland Blind Society and served as its Secretary for 24 years. He was actively interested in housing, Mayor of his town, Chairman of the local branch of the League of Nations Union, Governor of two secondary schools and a leading Free Churchman.

He defines Christian citizenship as the exercise of rights and performance of duties in accordance with the teaching of Christ, and shows how far we have fallen short of this high ideal, by subordinating man to the needs of production, by failing to provide workers with a living wage, by inequalities which foment class-war and by that artificial promotion of trade which leads to international conflict. He deals in turn with all these problems and tries to indicate possible remedies and a New Order which will "replace the belief in achievement by conflict, by belief in achievement by love . . . replace tyranny of class and race by fraternity," and shows how the Christian law of love may be applied to economic life. Wages, employment, commerce and industry, finance and education are all treated in turn, from the standpoint of the Christian, to whom it profits nothing if man gains the whole world but loses his own soul in the struggle. He pleads for Christian education in home and school and a realisation of the teaching profession as a Christian vocation.

The book has a preface by the Bishop of Bristol, who commends it as a Tract for the Times, specially relevant to-day when the Christian conception of the value of human personality is endangered as never before by totalitarian philosophy.

A Braille edition of *Christian Citizenship* has been prepared and is now obtainable from the National Institute.

King of Hearts with 3 cards in each suit should bid "No Trumps." If his partner has a strong suit in Diamonds he would bid "2 Diamonds" in which case the original bidder would go to "3 No Trumps" making game.

(5) In Ordinary Whist the players only learn where the good cards lie by the fall of the cards, but in Contract Whist the players learn where the strong cards lie by the bidding and have to play their hands in the light of this knowledge. This gives the game a certain liveliness.

(6) Sometimes top cards are evenly distributed amongst the 4 players, in which case none has a hand strong enough to make a bid. When all of the players say "No Bid" the cards are thrown in and the next whose turn it is to deal deals the cards afresh.

(7) If a player has a very strong hand he may open the bidding by saying 2 of his best suit. In this case his partner must keep the bidding open either by showing *his* strong suit or if he has a poor hand by saying "2 No Trumps." For example: if the bidder says "2 Diamonds" his partner must say "2 Hearts" to show he has a good suit in Hearts, but if his hand has no strength he would say "2 No Trumps." If the original bidder got the "No Trumps" response he would go to "3 Diamonds" if he thought the hand would play best in that suit.

Scoring.—Usually all 4 players keep a record of the score, but it is sufficient if one player on each side does this. The scoring card has a vertical line with a horizontal line across it near the middle. The scorer enters his own side's figure on the left-hand side of the vertical line and the opponent's score on the right-hand side. Above the horizontal line are entered the penalty points when the bidders fail to make their contract and also the points which are scored over and above contract. Below the horizontal line are put the points for the tricks gained. The side which first reaches 10 points or over wins the game, when a line is drawn horizontally and the record of the next game begins. When either side has won a second game the rubber is completed and all the figures are added up. The lower score is deducted from the higher and the winners are said to have won by the number of points then brought out.

Players of Ordinary Whist may think that all these explanations are a little complicated, but if they make a trial of Contract Whist they will find that it works out very simply. It will be a great help to beginners if they can get a sighted player of Contract Bridge to initiate them in the playing of Contract Whist.

THE REORGANISATION OF BLIND EDUCATION

ONE of the effects of the war has been the removal of schools from towns liable to air attack, and it seems likely that some at any rate of the schools for the blind thus forced to move from urban areas will elect, in happier times, to remain in the country and so give to the growing child that country background which is so desirable. War conditions and post-war conditions are likely in fact to accelerate rather than retard a drastic reorganisation of the education of the blind.

It is a reorganisation long overdue, and attributable, in part at least, to the fact that many schools for the blind date from early in the last century and were founded by philanthropists as independent units, long before there was any concerted scheme of blind welfare for the country as a whole. This unplanned distribution has meant that blind education has not shared in that reorganisation which has taken place in the past fifteen years in schools for the seeing, largely as a result of the Hadow Report; though the applicability of the Hadow scheme in some form to schools for the blind was recognised by a writer in the *Teacher of the Blind* at the time of the publication of that Report; he writes: "Only by understanding clearly the main plan of our national education . . . can we adapt our own schools to that plan and make them part of an organic whole."

Two possibilities were envisaged by the Joint Committee of the College of Teachers and the National Institute for the Blind in its Report. One was that the schools for the blind should adopt, in a modified form suited to their peculiar needs, the principles of the Hadow scheme; the other that there should be a few large residential schools, each with its programme for children from 5 to 16, comprising infant school, primary and post-primary departments, and, attached to these, a continuation school, giving secondary education to those likely to benefit, together with training in music and piano-tuning, commercial training, and training in the usual blind trades. But, though the majority of the members of the Joint Committee favoured the multi-phase school, there was a strong feeling among a minority that this type of school was open to the danger of over-institutionalising the blind child. Instead of the multi-phase school, holders of this view would favour a scheme by which special schools would provide for the specific needs of blind children of varying capacities, and, to a certain degree, of different ages.

Along these lines, it is an open secret that a Conference was recently held, with the encouragement of the Board of Education, to consider proposals by which the Royal Normal College should become a special school of combined central and technical character. The younger pupils now at the Royal Normal College would be exchanged for carefully selected older pupils now in other schools, who would receive at the College a more advanced type of general education, in preparation for training in music, shorthand-typing and piano-tuning. The transfer would probably be made at the age of 13-14, and the selection, in which every child would receive due and impartial consideration, would in no way interfere with the selection of boys and girls (probably at the age of 9-11, in view of the fact that they would have new subjects to acquire) likely to benefit by transfer for higher education to Worcester College or Chorleywood College. If it happened that a child selected at this earlier age for higher education appeared later to be more likely to earn a livelihood in music, typewriting or piano-tuning than in a professional occupation, he would be transferred to the Royal Normal College for training at any age when this decision was reached. A child transferred from the Royal Normal College to any other school for the blind could, if at the age of 13-14 he appeared suitable for training in music, typing or tuning, return to the Royal Normal College for this purpose.

An essential condition of the scheme is that any school not charged with a specialist function should no longer maintain specialist training courses.

There is clearly an immense amount to be said for and about the plan outlined above. War conditions have already set a change in motion, and it is of vital importance that changes made should be in the right direction, and the principles involved be fully discussed. It is therefore hoped that those concerned in this important matter will be willing to express their views through the columns of this paper.

THE EDITOR.

A NEW ART

By W. H. COATES.

(Concluded from last month's issue)

III.

IN order to continue this subject, I will now give some account of my own limited experience, through touch, of sculpture, carving, pottery and furniture, and see whether we can draw any conclusions from it, or find any indications in it.

In Oxford Cathedral stands an ancient tomb in a small chapel, where the memory of a local saint is kept sweet in the scent of ever fresh flowers. Above the tomb is a canopy, over several arches, and the whole structure above and below is profusely carved with foliage and fruit and faces. Examining this tomb with the help of a friend, I found that most of the faces were badly mutilated; but there were some which gave me considerable pleasure because I thought I was able to distinguish the different types represented, and to decipher their grave and serene expression. But when we came to the vegetation I was a little disappointed. No doubt the artist had done his work very well in trying to give a semblance of depth—of leaf overlapping leaf and spray half concealing spray, with a glimpse of a bunch of grapes here and there. But that artist was working for the eye. My hand could make little of this jumble of little lines and curves and ridges and grooves. Only now and again, when I happened to come upon the outline of a complete leaf or bunch of fruit, could I really believe that this was a carved grape-vine.

Another thing which became clear then was that the material got in my way. I was too conscious of the hard, solid quality of the stone under my fingers—such a crushing contrast to the dainty lightness and airiness of leaves. This may perhaps be a weakness. Perhaps we ought to concentrate on shape and line, and not allow texture to obtrude itself. Yet that seems to me rather like not minding about the tone of the piano so long as one plays Beethoven sonatas on it. I am sure it will be found more difficult to get rid of texture in touch than in sight. It may be that stone draperies can be made to look like clouds of the flimsiest lawn, but I don't know how anything done in stone could give that impression to the touch. When I see figures lying in their robes on the tops of their marble tombs, my respect for their dignity is tempered by pity for a creature who has to support all that weight. There is poor Queen Bess, standing on high in Cumnor Church, Berkshire. I can only reach the lower part of her

skirt, but that is such a huge mass that it overwhelms me, as though the whole statue had toppled down exhausted on top of me.

But let us be serious again and speak about dolls. I am not referring to the squeaking, pudding-faced effigy of the toyshop, but a creature who shall exhibit some human grace of face and form. If I were making a statue, the body would be a hard framework or skeleton anatomically stuffed and padded with softer material (but not straw or horsehair). Exposed parts, such as hands and face, would be covered with some material like soft, thin leather, through which would be felt the outlines of bones and muscles. And the clothes would be real clothes. Such a creation would be less durable than wood and stone and bronze, but to me it would be more satisfying, because nearer to the original.

Pottery can often be studied in the ordinary course of life. Teacups, for example, furnish a surprising variety of design. The worst abomination is the squat, fat-bellied, thick-lipped fellow, like an old libertine heavy with the dregs of his own excesses. Then there is the firm-set, ample, straight-sided cup, generous and practical like a buxom farmer's wife. Finally, there is the elegant vessel in very thin china, standing on a small base, gradually expanding towards the top, until there is a sudden outward movement at the very brim, like a gesture of bestowal. She is constantly being upset, though. Some wine glasses are beautiful too. To drink wine from them is like sipping nectar from a flower.

In choosing among the endless variety of glass and porcelain vases, bowls, urns, pots, etc., individual taste will naturally play a large part. Some will favour heavy decorations and elaborate patterns; others will think that a beautiful shape is enough in itself, and that adornments upon it are only encumbrances. Some will like the homely geniality of large convexities and stubby necks, or the patriarchal benevolence of tallness and big sweeping curves; others the austerity of the sharp straight line—the virginal—the light and graceful. Some vases show that their sole purpose is to minister to and harmonise with the beauty of the royal personages which are to dwell in them and overshadow them; others, more pretentious, strive after self-sufficiency; yet others are happy enough if they hold a handful of spills in a warm place on the kitchen mantelshelf.

Boxes and trays of various shapes and sizes, accurately made and perfectly finished in good wood or bakelite, partake of that simple beauty of the geometrical figure—something utterly intrinsic; not to be analysed, never dislodged by discussion, revealed only in moments of quiet contemplation.

Furniture is the blind man's architecture. Real architecture is out of his reach. He would very soon wear himself out, if he didn't break his neck, doing the round of the churches with a ladder. But in furniture one may see much the same thing on a lesser scale. For one thing it is physically much larger than any of the other forms we have discussed; and for another, there is the sense of its having been built up—fitted together part by part. There is harmony in it. Each part has its proper relation to every other part and to the whole design. And what gives this harmony is purpose—fitness for the function for which the structure was intended. Fitness and beauty together are almost sure to impress the mind. Machines, domestic or otherwise, often give this impression of beauty and fitness, especially large machines in motion.

But if there is to be any touch-art as such, it must be an entirely new art. It must start from zero. If the sense of touch differs from the sense of sight in its picture of the world, so will the touch-art differ from all these other arts which have to do with the eye. What is of value to the eye may be of no value to the hand, and *vice versa*. Our touch-art must be independent from the first. If it should turn out that eye and hand do in fact agree about some things, well and good; but it would be disastrous to start off by pre-supposing anything of the kind.

There are three possible lines of development: first, pieces which are beautiful in themselves, without particular reference to anything outside themselves; second, representations of other objects; and third, things which are meant to be utilised as well as admired. In all three categories texture—that is, the material used—is important, especially in the second. It is in shape and design that the more highly æsthetic and spiritual appeal can be made, but texture can be a powerful aid or hindrance to it, especially where an illusion has to be created.

These things would have to be made by the blind themselves. Anyone else would be certain to use his eyes and think in terms of sight from beginning to end. This raises a set of problems of craftsmanship which would have to be settled by ingenuity and patient training and perhaps the devising of a few tools.

And is it going to be worth all the trouble? Are there going to be any results worth mentioning? That is a question which none can answer until the thing has been tried. It is a venture; a journey of which we can only see the first few steps. What is needed is for the right kind of man to become interested—a man who can work with his hands and who has besides vision and originality and resourcefulness and initiative. There may be such men among our shopworkers and homeworkers. They may be lurking among our so-called "unemployables," or growing up in our schools. Wherever they may be, here is something to interest them, and to give scope to their particular artistic faculties. Once they are really interested, we may safely leave the rest to them, and the new art will very soon have entered upon its first experimental stage.

ZERO HOUR

By F. W. PRESTON-JARMAN

IN these days of mortal strife we hear much of zero hour. Indeed, if we heard even more, there would be good reason; for, surely, in no previous wartime has zero hour arrived for so many people and under such a diversity of tragic circumstance.

Nor can there ever have been a time when the plain citizens of this country have received so much advice and instruction to prepare them mentally and morally for the zero hour of so many unpleasant ordeals: possible, probable, or certain.

So it is worthy of note that as yet the Government would not appear to have made any organised attempt to use its great modern

facilities to fortify the public against the zero hour of possible physical blindness.

Nevertheless, the omission can cause no genuine surprise. There is, of course, an extreme probability that when hostilities cease the number of those who can no longer see will be found to have grown appreciably. At the moment, in fact, the danger and risk of losing one's sight may at a moderate guess be greater than at any other time during the past century. Yet such is the outstanding gravity of some other of the country's war problems which closely affect every citizen that, presumably, the danger of an appreciable wartime increase in cases of physical blindness takes on, by grim

comparison, the appearance of a minor issue.

At all events, coaching on the present lines and scale to help our citizens more effectively to withstand the shocks of harsh and grievous experience is not merely a new departure, it is also something of a revolution. Certainly, for the purposes of supporting morale, the Government has long been able at the onset of crisis or emergency to rely upon the powerful aid of a widely diffused press. And, as we all know, in the same direction church, school and tradition have all played a valuable part on countless occasions, and will go on doing so. Now, however, at the zero hour of a variety of sorely disturbing experiences, the chief ministers of the Crown and other authorities come straight to the microphone and have heart-to-heart as well as head-to-head talks with most of us.

But at this period, timely, expert and widespread guidance for every searching trial, every psychological hard knock, that may affect the many, is doubtless too much to expect. Once again, perhaps, the inevitability of gradualness must be acknowledged. Still this may well be an opportune time to point out one particular gap that the future may usefully close. This gap, indeed, becomes clear when it is realised that men and women can still "go blind," suddenly or gradually, with little or no preparation for the ordeal, immediate or long-term, that is likely to follow.

This is by no manner of means to suggest that our land is not well supplied with people willing and able to offer sound advice on how best to take it when sight is lost. No, the real problem is how such advice can be communicated in due season to those who run special risks, or are otherwise in danger of losing their sight. In too many cases, it must be feared, the desirability still less the necessity, of receiving advice does not even occur to possible victims. To cover every case it is reasonable to go further and suggest that good rough-and-ready advice on the subject should miss but few.

The jest is often heard about some clinging burden or impediment that "The first ten years are the worst!" In all seriousness, the worst may indeed last ten years or more if, when sight goes, the right attitude is not struck, if at zero hour the new situation is not tackled in a bold and effective spirit and frame of mind. At the very worst, nothing but a feckless attack on the new situation would develop, and the exacting zero hour might never pass.

But when precisely does zero hour arrive? To this question it is not easy to give a single complete answer. In one case zero hour may come when a man has sufficiently recovered from a bad accident to realise that he has lost

his sight totally and for ever. In another case, when a man finds that his favourite column in the newspaper is no longer for him, not even with the aid of spectacles on a bright day. In another, when an oculist expresses his opinion that within a space of as much as fifteen years his patient will see no more. In yet another it is conceivable that there will be a number of zero hours, each one corresponding with a particular stage of sight deterioration. And so on.

Thus in the absence of a free and widespread circulation of salutary guidance, sheer chance alone is likely to give a new victim the needful assistance at the right moment. And here it may be noted that it would not appear to be the normal function of the oculist to advise on the psychological aspects of his patient's trouble, although, were they sought, he would be among the last to decline to state his views. Furthermore, the popular Press does not offer special articles or apt information on the subject, and presumably is not likely to do so on its own initiative until assured of some general demand.

It may, of course, be argued that in the long run a handicap can only be borne in accordance with a victim's own natural tendencies. Yet, although it may contain an element of truth, such argument cannot dispose of our crucial problem of zero hour. It cannot set aside the power of a flexible mind, the immediate influence of battered hopes, shrouded ambitions, and new conditions generally, or the value of communicative experience.

Whatever the circumstances of a victim may be at zero hour, the practical question is almost bound to arise "What must my course be?" What can, what should, it be? Is it wiser, more expedient, better all round, to be grave or gay, supine or industrious, humble or proud, to indulge in a languishing martyrdom or serenely to take the line of most resistance?

Some newly dimmed folk, previously blessed with the gift of balanced judgment can be trusted to deal adequately with the question. In their choice of an answer others, no doubt, can be lucky. But no one to whom the question comes can afford to dispense with a sound tip, and no answer should be anything but a responsible one.

The answer, in fact, should not merely serve the material interests of a newly dimmed, but also offer ample scope for the development of the better side of his or her character. Only in this way can the dimmed community, too, be well served.

Not over far in the future, perhaps, the sound tip for the zero hour of dimmedness will start to flow over the air.

INTERCHANGE

INTERCHANGE of teachers in this country with teachers of Canada, Australia and other Dominions has been carried out under the auspices of the League of Empire Scheme with considerable success for a number of years. It has led to a certain percentage of teachers—small perhaps—gaining first-hand knowledge of the educational systems of other countries, and a broadened outlook on life in general. Until the end of the war this scheme must lie in abeyance.

It seems, however, that a similar scheme might be operated between schools in this country. Some schools for the blind are still in their peace-time premises. Others are evacuated to country districts. Teachers in the former still enjoy the amenities of town life, but have to contend with all the difficulties consequent upon air-raid warnings and war-time conditions. Teachers in the country districts are more or less immune from this, but lack the amenities of town life. When off duty they are more or less confined to barracks, due to difficulties of

transport and, during the winter months, to the blackness and loneliness of country roads and woods.

Why not let teachers in town schools interchange with teachers in evacuated schools—say, for a month or a term? Apart from providing a change for both parties, the interchange would be valuable from an educational point of view, and give teachers a wider insight into work for the blind in various schools.

It would be necessary to establish a central bureau where teachers who would care to interchange might register their names and schools, and state the kind of class they would prefer—kindergarten, upper, lower, etc. This might be undertaken by the College of Teachers of the Blind or the National Institute for the Blind, and conducted by correspondence.

As far as salary is concerned, the teacher would remain on the pay-roll where he or she is permanently employed. Before the scheme is established, it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the Board of Education.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

The Rt. Hon. Charles A. McCurdy, P.C., K.C., for many years Honorary Adviser on Propaganda to the National Institute for the Blind. Mr. McCurdy was a remarkable man in many ways. Called to the Bar in 1896, he became a Member of Parliament for Northumberland in 1910 and was appointed Food Controller in 1920, when he became a member of the Privy Council. He was Liberal Whip in the Coalition Parliament, but resigned his position to become Chairman of United Newspapers, the Fleet Street group which, at that time, published the *Daily Chronicle* and *Lloyd's News*. In that later capacity he impressed himself surely on Fleet Street as a man of outstandingly fine judgment and power of decision.

Those to whom he gave his friendship knew how wide were his interests and how profound his knowledge in many diverse subjects. Few knew of his charitable interests, but there must be many comparatively young men who remember with gratitude the wise and practical counsel and help he was always willing to give them. He had a remarkable flair for publicity and, from the time he agreed to help the National Institute for the Blind, he gave that organisation invaluable assistance. Putting up a proposition

to him was a dangerous delight. He had no respect for conventions, analogies or second-hand thinking. He demanded of every proposal that it should be precisely adapted to the object in view, and deliberately calculated to produce an appropriate effect on a clearly envisaged section of the public. On the other hand, he would take infinite pains to put a good idea into the best possible form. Massage was one of the subjects of which he had a wide range of curious and intimate knowledge, and he applied himself with particular keenness to the problem of putting on its feet the Alfred Eichholz Clinic for Massage and Physiotherapy. No ordinary Publicity Adviser would have known of the existence of the medical and surgical prints which he traced out in order to illustrate some of the Eichholz Clinic publications. His was a rare personality with its combination of business power and cultural depth, and he will be remembered with gratitude and appreciation for the help he gave the blind.

F. E. C. Day, A.C.A., Chief Accountant of the National Institute for the Blind. His death at the age of 38 is a real loss to blind welfare. A man of the highest professional qualifications, he was also a fine character and a charming per-

sonality. He gained much of his experience in accountancy in Germany as a member of the staff of Messrs. Price, Waterhouse & Co., a firm which had an immense business on the Continent built on the reputation, too little known perhaps here at home, of Englishmen for conscientious thoroughness in matters of finance. Mr. Day fitted perfectly into that rôle. He had the physical as well as mental and moral attributes of a good Englishman. He applied for the post at the National Institute in 1934 because he saw trouble coming with the rise of Hitler, and it was appropriate to that vision of what was coming upon the world that, at the time of his death, he had become an invaluable officer of the Home Guard in the neighbourhood of his home at Chalfont St. Giles. If he had been free to enter the regular Forces, he would have undoubtedly risen rapidly in the military scale, for he applied to Home Guard soldiering just those qualities of conscientious attention to detail and punctilious performance of the task in hand which made him invaluable as an officer of the National Institute.

The respect and admiration felt for him locally was made evident at his funeral at Chalfont St. Giles on the 18th November. Over 50 members of the local Platoon paraded on that weekday afternoon to play their part in the semi-military funeral which was accorded to him.

The sympathy of the Institute's Council, of the whole staff, and of the numerous visitors and other people who have contact with the Institute's work goes in full measure to his widow, his son and daughter.

Walter Vincent Ireland, aged 38. From 1936 to shortly before his death he was on the staff of the National Institute for the Blind, where he did much valuable work in connection with Talking Books, dealing mainly with the testing and maintenance of Talking Book machines. He lived at Southend all his life until May, 1940, when he moved to Sudbury, where he was a part-time Air Raid Warden.

Charles Glynn, of Kilrush House, Kilrush, Co. Clare. For many years he was known by the blind throughout the County as a friend. One of the blind people whom he befriended writes: "His home, Kilrush House, was made the centre for the Clare Branch of the National Council for the Blind, and it was always open to them to receive advice, to secure the makings for wicker, rush or fibre work to be done at home. At all seasons of the year his car was seen, driven by himself or his good lady, loaded with the collected blind-made baskets or stools going along the lonely bog or coast roads; or at other times bringing the new or repaired radio sets and

recharged low-tension batteries they would be freely giving and delivering. That same car was always at the disposal of the ailing blind on their long journeyings to and from hospital, and it was always Mr. or Mrs. Glynn would be at the wheel and never a servant. Mrs. Glynn has the prayers and dearest sympathy of all the blind who knew her husband and who know her."

Miss Gertrude Marie Humphreys, aged 48, of Wantage, whose death was caused by a road accident. She was known widely for her work for the Berkshire County Blind Society.

Alderman J. B. Love, of Plymouth, aged 79. He was the oldest Trustee of the Western Counties Blind Institution at Torr.

Alderman J. Trumble, J.P., aged 84. The sightless people of Croydon have lost their best friend. Alderman Trumble has been the mainstay of the Croydon Voluntary Association for the Blind since its inception, and when it was decided to implement the Blind Persons Act, 1920, Croydon Council entrusted Mr. Trumble with the carrying out of the scheme, and nominated him as Chairman of the Blind Persons Act Committee. Since that time he has been in the forefront whenever any step has been taken for the betterment of the sightless people of the borough.

In 1931 Bedford Hall was built for the use and entertainment of the blind, and Alderman Trumble was instrumental in raising a very large part of the necessary money. Just before the war a scheme was being considered whereby a Home for some of the aged and lonely blind could be started in Croydon, and a considerable sum had been raised for the purpose when war conditions put a temporary stop to the idea. Beside being Chairman of the Blind Persons Act Committee, Alderman Trumble was Chairman and President of the Association and a Trustee of the Bates Pension Fund.

William Ross Young, M.A., F.E.I.S., at Stronvar, Larbert, Stirlingshire, aged 76. Mr. Young was the late Headmaster at Larbert Central School, and after his retirement and when about 70 years of age, he took up the study of Braille with a view to transcribing books for the Glasgow and West of Scotland Mission to the Blind. He became a very proficient Brailist, and in addition to transcribing quite a number of books for the Mission's Library, he acted as Braille Examiner at the Annual Reading and Writing Competition held in the Mission's premises. He was a man of sterling Christian character, and will be greatly missed in the community where he took an active part in public affairs, in addition to his valuable work for the Mission.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home.

National Library for the Blind (Northern Branch).—The Library suffered seriously in the Christmas raids on Manchester, when incendiary bombs started fires in the Book Production Department, and “the whole of the building from the roof to the cellars was soaked with water, which did almost as much damage as the fire”; the total loss on this occasion amounted to over £2,400, and it is amazing to read that within three days of the calamity books were again being despatched to readers. Since then the Library has sustained further damage to the fabric of the building, though on this occasion the books escaped. The Report deals very briefly with the whole affair, but its Committee and staff are to be congratulated on the way they have carried on in the face of unforeseen difficulties, so that even after the Christmas damage, books were sent out and blind workers retained in full employment.

Henshaw's Institution for the Blind.—There are now 75 children on the register of the elementary department, and at the time of compiling the Report the girls were receiving their instruction at the Fulwood Homes for the Blind, Preston, and efforts were being made to find suitable premises for the boys, whose school building at Old Trafford had been seriously damaged during a raid in the Christmas holidays. (Since the compilation of the Report arrangements have been completed, and the boys are now in Shropshire.) The Mary Ann Scott Home, formerly in Old Trafford, has been transferred to a house near Macclesfield, where the residents have settled down happily. *In spite of difficulties*, first due to enemy action and then to a fire, by which the output of the Institution's factory has been seriously handicapped, it is satisfactory that the total sales have reached a record figure of £24,751, and the loss of £3,179 is the lowest for a considerable time.

Royal Association in Aid of the Deaf and Dumb.—It is grievous to read in the Report that the Association's Churches are among those that have suffered from enemy action; All Saints, Paddington, and St. Bede's, Clapham, have sustained considerable damage, and two other Churches have been less seriously injured. But because the spirit of the Churches means

more than their bricks and mortar the work of the Association has gone on unhindered, and the deaf and dumb have realised perhaps more than ever before how much they owe to the opportunities afforded them by the Association for worship and fellowship. That the deaf and dumb themselves were responsible for raising nearly £120 at a Sale of Work in aid of the work shows how much they appreciate the Society's help. One feature of the war has been the solution, for the time being, of the problem of employment, and the deaf are showing themselves capable of helping forward the national effort.

Royal School of Industry, Bristol.—“The work of the school has been carried out efficiently during the year, in spite of the many interruptions by day and night of ‘Alert’ periods . . . the way the staff and the children, too, have stood up to this strain is deserving of the very highest praise.” “The work of the home teaching service has been heavily increased as a result of air raids.” “Though some time has inevitably been lost owing to raids, it is gratifying to note a further increase of sales. The difficulties of the past year have proved a challenge to which all have made answer with success.” The Report for 1940-41 is a brief one, but these excerpts should be enough to show that it is eminently satisfactory. That the Bristol Fund for the Blind was successful in raising over £1,500, and that the Institution's premises have escaped serious injury are two more items of news that justify optimism.

Braille Missionary Union.—It is remarkable in view of present conditions that this Society, engaged in transcribing the Bible and devotional books into Braille for the use of missionaries, has prepared and despatched a record number of volumes in 1940; twenty languages were represented. The reports received from the mission field are marked by that cheerful confidence characteristic of men and women working in conditions of unusual difficulty but sustained by the faith that “rejoices in tribulations.” Work for the blind at the Lwala Mission, North Rhodesia, progresses, and is being encouraged by the Government, so that it is hoped shortly that 20 blind men may be taken as resident pupils. The blind schools of China also report progress, one missionary writing: “The industrial department is working at full pressure,” and another reports opening special classes for the development of the senses of hearing, touch and smell.

Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind.—It is specially encouraging to read that

the voluntary contributions in this, the first complete year of the war, actually exceeded those of the previous year, and in spite of the war-time calls upon the time and energies of voluntary workers, the number of these shows no decline.

The Association was able to render valuable help to the Southampton Association last winter after the heavy air raids of December, 1940, and assisted in tracing the blind on the Register and helping those who had lost their homes to move to safer quarters.

Mrs. Fassnidge, the County Secretary, whose work was highly valued by the Committee, has unfortunately been obliged to give up her post, and has been succeeded by Miss E. N. Whittome.

Aberdare Blind Welfare Association.—This is one of the smaller Associations, with a register of only 135 cases, of whom more than 70 per cent. are over 60 years of age. Although there is apparently no home teacher employed, the report shows that a good deal is being done for the elderly blind at the Social Centre, where weekly dominoes and whist tournaments, a Braille and typing class, religious services, and two winter socials are evidence of activity. A photograph of a Braille class at work against an open air background is attractively grouped. Nearly £800 of the Association's income is derived from the donations of colliery and transport workers.

Aberdeen Town and County Association.—Anyone who reads annual reports with the object of reviewing them seizes eagerly on anything that has human interest; and some of the most modestly produced reports are the most alive. The Aberdeen Association's account of its year's work is one of these. It covers a very wide field, for its home teachers range from the city of Aberdeen to the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and we read that "one gentleman aged 76 could read Moon most expertly after only ten lessons," that "a boy nine years old, while waiting for admission to a school for blind children, learned Braille," and that pastime workers in the Shetlands are doing knitting for the Red Cross, while in the Orkneys blind men are helping with sheep and poultry.

Lindsey Blind Society.—This Society records a remarkably successful year, when the amount received from collections increased from £382 to £957, a fact which, in the words of the report, "reflects very great credit on the generosity of the public and upon the efforts of Mr. H. Scott, the local organiser of the National Institute and this Society." The trading activities of the Society have grown, and the amount paid to

blind workers in wages during the year has increased. One interesting note tells of the making of 2,000 brushwood fire beaters (recommended by the Ministry of Agriculture) to combat incendiary bombs which might destroy the crops. Enemy action has destroyed the Society's brush workshop at Spilsby, but alternative premises were secured, and work was resumed after only a brief interval.

Empire.

Sydney Industrial Blind Institution.—The Report for 1940 is an encouraging one, despite wartime difficulties, and the total sales of blind workers reached a record figure of £25,116, and provided regular employment for 123 workers. An interesting note in the Report deals with "the Glowworm session," which is a special broadcasting feature for blind listeners and blind artists; during the year 26 blind musicians have contributed to the weekly programme, the products of blind workers have been brought to the notice of the public, and the general activities of the Sydney Institution made more widely known. One feature of this enterprise has been the fact that through it many new cases of blindness have been brought to the notice of the Institution. Blind workers in the Institution's hostel for women have made their contribution to the war effort by learning to spin wool direct from the fleece, and to knit therefrom the large sea-boot stockings used by the Navy.

Foreign.

American Foundation for the Blind.—The President's report for 1940 (beautifully illustrated) treats very briefly of the year's activities, and only refers to outstanding accomplishments. These include an impressive inventory of goods made by the blind for national defence (brooms, deck swabs, mattresses, mats, pillow cases and mailing bags are among them) and we are told that the programme of National Industries for the Blind gave employment to 450 additional blind workers during the year.

The recent discussion in THE NEW BEACON of the educational possibilities of the Talking Book gives special interest to the remark in the Report that a grant from the Carnegie Corporation has enabled the Foundation to make an intensive study of the Talking Book as an educational medium, and we shall look forward to reading the results of the investigation. A special course to enable teachers to train in order to fit themselves for giving instruction in dramatic work to blind students is another interesting "high-light" of the President's report.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Woman Chess Champion.—Mrs. Jas. A. Alger, the only lady member of the Braille Chess Association, has been awarded the prize for “the best played game of the year.” Mr. T. H. Tylor, the blind British champion and chessmaster, was the judge. In making the award, Mr. Tylor said “It was a game of outstanding interest and achievement, meriting the highest praise.”

Mrs. Alger, who has been blind for the past 10 years, plays for Worcestershire in the B.B.C. championship, and played in the international championship match, Great Britain v. U.S.A., when her opponent was Mr. Patrick Butler, of New York, a sighted man. She won her game. In 1925 she won the championship of Kidderminster.

Blind Golf Champion.—Marvin Shannon, of Fort Worth, Texas, has won the “blind golf championship of the world” with an eight and seven victory over Clint Russell, of Duluth, Minnesota.

Both men are blind. They played the course with friends giving them information on wind, obstructions and distances.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

Associated Board of the Royal Academy and Royal
College of Music, 1942 and 1943 Examinations.

Piano :		s.	d.
18499	Preliminary	1	0
18500	Grade 1 (Primary), Lists A, B ..	1	0
18501	Grade 2 (Elementary), Lists A, B ..	1	0
18502	Grade 3 (Transitional), Lists A, B ..	1	6
18503	Grade 4 (Lower), Lists A, B ..	1	6
18504	Grade 5 (Higher), List B ..	1	6
18505	Grade 6 (Intermediate), List A ..	1	6
Organ :			
18574	Croft, W. Voluntary in C (Hinrichsen Edition)	0	6
18515	Frescobaldi. Fugue in D minor (No. 1 of Three Fugues, edited by T. W. Bourne)	0	6
18573	Handel. Gavotte, Minuet and Tambourin (arr. by H. A. Bate)	0	6
18575	Thiman, Eric H. Pastorale in E (Hinrichsen Edition)	0	6

Dance :

18516	Bond, Baxter and Gay. You're lovely To-night, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18570	Brown, N. H. You stepped out of a Dream, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6

18571	Sherwin, M. It doesn't mean a Thing, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
18572	Strachey, J. Inside my Wedding Ring, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6

BRAILLE BOOKS.

The prices represent the actual cost of production. Blind residents in any part of the British Empire are charged one-third of the quoted price, except where a net price is given.

Miscellaneous :

18539	Braille Books Catalogue : Fourth Supplementary List of Books embossed in Braille. Contains particulars of all Braille books issued by the National Institute from February, 1940, to January, 1941. S.E.B. Pamphlet. E.17. 2d. net.		
14292	Calendar, 1942. 6d.		
	Diaries, 1942 :—		
14293	Large size, 6½ in. by 5 in. Gents. 2d. net.		
14293	Small size, 5 in. by 4 in. Ladies. 1½d. net.		
14295	Almanack, 1942. Including Calendar of Events, Sun's Rising and Setting, Phases of the Moon, and topical articles. Pamphlet. E.28. 2s. 6d.		
18604	N.I.B. Christmas Annual, 1941. Pamphlet. E.30. 6d. net.		

Religious and Devotional—Scriptures :

14297	Scripture Union Portions, 1942. Pamphlet. 9d.		
14298	Daily Scripture Text Calendar, 1942. Loose leaves. Interpointed. 2s. 9d.		

Forthcoming Pandas.

No. 49. Evil Under the Sun, by Agatha Christie. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

Hercule Poirot is taking a lazy August holiday on the South Coast. But there is evil everywhere under the sun and he is disturbed by an urgent call on his ingenuity in solving mystery. A masterpiece of shrewd detection, according to the rules.

No. 50. Out of the People, by J. B. Priestley. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

Freed from the restrictions of war-time broadcasting J. B. Priestley now fully speaks his mind on our social and political problems. He shows that the only alternative to the “Masters and Masses” system is a new and vital democracy. His argument is a wealth of ideas and is brilliantly written.

MOON BOOKS.

4525-33	Whiteoaks, by M. de la Roche. 9 vols. (Limited Edition.)		
4534	Courage : A collection of Verses compiled by Edmund Warde. Small volume. 1s. 4d. net.		
4536	Honeysuckle Cottage, by Wodehouse, and The Night Before His Honeymoon, by Gilbert Frankau. Large volume, paper cover. 2s. net.		
4537	Bats in the Belfry, by Harry Graham, and Look This Way, Baby, by F. E. Bailey. (Grade Two Moon.) Large volume. 2s. net.		
4535	Daily Text Calendar, 1942. Price 1s. 2d. net.		
	Christmas Cards. Four varieties. Price 3d. each, net.		

NEW APPARATUS.

A LEVEL FOR CARPENTERS.

The National Institute is now able to meet a long-felt need and supply a Level for Carpenters. The apparatus consists of a wooden frame with two steel rails on which a steel ball one inch in diameter travels. The level operates in exactly the same way as the spirit in the ordinary instrument used by sighted people.

Catalogue No. 9411.

Full List price, 7s. 6d.

Special price to blind individuals, 5s.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

30th November, 1941.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington	.. —
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Whitfield, Northumberland	 —
Guest House for Blind Women, Leamington	.. —
Wavertree House, Hove	 —
The Haven, Scarborough	 —

Name of Home.	Vacancies.
Bannow, St. Leonards	 —
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	 —
Home of Rest, Green Tiles, Bigbury-on-Sea	.. —
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring	.. 3
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay	.. 14
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ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

WANTED—TECHNICAL MISTRESS FOR ROUND AND FLAT KNITTING. Must have Certificate of C.T.B. or be prepared to take this. Apply Principal, Barclay School for Blind Girls, Little Paddocks, Sunninghill, Berks.

“CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP.”

By A. K. Turner

With a Preface by the Bishop of Bristol.

A Tract for the Times by a distinguished blind social worker (see review, page 202). Obtainable in Braille (price 9d. net) and letterpress (price 6d. net) from the National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

WANTED: Copy of “Physical Education of the Blind” (Report of the Summer Course held in July, 1933, at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage). Full price—2s. 6d.—offered for copy in good condition. Apply Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

Home Teacher and Visitor (sighted female) required. Salary: Certificated £165 per annum, Uncertificated £137 per annum. Applications stating age, experience and qualifications, accompanied by copies of two recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the Superintendent, Wigan, Leigh and District Workshops for the Blind, Darlington Street East, Wigan, not later than the 27th December, 1941.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1942.

Qualified Home Teacher, with many successes to his credit concerning past Examinations, continues to offer comprehensive postal tuition in Braille and Professional Knowledge; also helpful guidance respecting the service as a whole. Apply (enclosing stamp) to: H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

The Southern Regional Association for the Blind: Training Course for Home Teachers of the Blind at Birmingham. This four months' course includes practical experience with the Blind. Candidates must be approved by the Association and will be expected to take the next College of Teachers' Examination after completion of their training; they must be not less than 21 or more than 35 years of age. Exceptions to this rule may be made during the war.

For full particulars, including fees chargeable and details of grants to trainees, apply to the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W. 1.

HAVE YOU A BRAILLE WATCH?

Have you a Braille Watch—not in daily use but tucked away somewhere in a box or drawer? There is an urgent need for Braille Watches, especially amongst the newly blind and the war-blinded, and the National Institute for the Blind is experiencing great difficulty in meeting the requirements.

If you have a Braille Watch which you no longer require, the Institute will be most grateful if you will send it to 224 Great Portland Street, W.1, where it will be valued and payment made, if required. The watches should be in fair condition.

NORTHERN COUNTIES ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.**Training Course for Prospective HOME TEACHERS.**

The Annual Training Course organised by the above Association will be held, commencing about the beginning of March, 1942, and occupying a period of four weeks. Approval of the Association must be obtained before admittance to the course, and candidates must be not less than twenty-one or more than forty years of age on the date of the 1942 Examination, which they must undertake to sit. Subsistence grants and travelling expenses will be paid on behalf of approved candidates residing within the Association's area.

Details and forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary, Northern Counties Association for the Blind, 17, Blenheim Terrace, Leeds, 2. When asking for details please quote THE NEW BEACON.

TWO SIGHTED HOME TEACHERS (Females) required, either

(a) Holding the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Salary £156 per annum, rising to £200, plus War Bonus; or

(b) Probationer, at a salary of £104 per annum, plus War Bonus, who will be expected to obtain the College of Teachers' Certificate within two years of date of appointment and upon qualifying may be accepted as a Home Teacher and receive a salary according to Society's scale. Work entails visiting, pastime occupations and welfare of blind people, etc.

Applications stating age, education and qualifications, together with copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the undersigned not later than 28th December, 1941.

(Miss) P. Wanless, Acting Secretary, Home Teaching Society for the Blind in Newcastle and Gateshead, Sutherland Memorial Hall, Jesmond Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2.

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v. 25, 1941

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201 WEST 18TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10011

